A CHARGE

DELIVERED TO THE

CLERGY

AT THE

PRIMARY VISITATION OF THE DIOCESE OF DURHAM,

IN THE YEAR MDCCLI;

BY THE RIGHT REVEREND FATHER IN GOD

JOSEPH BUTLER, LL.D.

THEN LORD BISHOP OF THAT DIOCESE.

THE SECOND EDITION.

WITH A

PREFACE,

GIVING SOME ACCOUNT OF THE CHARACTER AND WRITINGS OF THE AUTHOR,

BY SAMUEL, LORD BISHOP OF GLOUCESTER.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR T. CADELL IN THE STRAND.

MDCC LXXXVI.

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BY SAMUEL Lord Bishop of

TO

THE REVEREND

Dr. THOMAS BALGUY,

ARCHDEACON AND PREBENDARY OF WINCHESTER, &c.

DEAR SIR,

I Truſt you will excuſe the liberty I have taken of prefixing your Name to the following ſheets; the latter part of which, I am confident, will not be thought undeſerving of your approbation; and of the former part you will commend the intention at leaſt, if not the execution. In vindicating the character of Biſhop BUTLER from the aſperſions thrown upon it ſince his death, I have but diſcharged a common duty of humanity, which ſurvivors owe to thoſe who have deſerved well of mankind by their lives or writings,

when they are paſt the power of appearing in their own defence. And if what I have added, by way of opening the general deſign of the works of this great Prelate, be of uſe in exciting the younger claſs of Students in our Univerſities to read, and ſo to read as to underſtand, the Two Volumes prepared and publiſhed by the Author himſelf; I flatter myſelf I ſhall have done no inconſiderable ſervice to Morality and Religion. Your time and ſtudies have been long ſucceſsfully devoted to the ſupport of the ſame great cauſe: and in what you have lately given to the world, both as an Author and an Editor, you have largely contributed to the defence of our common Chriſtianity, and of what was eſteemed by One, who was perfectly compe-

tent

tent to judge, its beſt Eſtabliſhment, the Church of ENGLAND. In the preſent publication I conſider myſelf as a fellow-labourer with You in the ſame deſign, and tracing the path You have trod before, but at great diſtance, and with unequal paces. When, by His MAJESTY's goodneſs, I was raiſed to that ſtation of eminence in the Church, to which You had been firſt named, and which, on account of the infirmity of your health, You had deſired to decline; it was honour enough for Me on ſuch an occaſion to have been thought of next to You: And I know of no better rule by which to govern my conduct, ſo as not to diſcredit the Royal Hand which conferred on me ſo ſignal and unmerited a favour, than in caſes of difficulty to put the queſtion to myſelf,

How

How You would probably have acted in the ſame ſituation. You ſee, Sir, I ſtill look up to You, as I have been wont, both as my Superior and my Example. That I may long reap the benefit of your advice and friendſhip; and that ſuch a meaſure of health and ſtrength may be continued to You, as may enable you to paſs the evening of your days with comfort, and enjoy the bleſſings of the life you love; is the cordial wiſh of,

Dear Sir,

Your very affectionate

and faithful Servant,

S. GLOUCESTER.

Dartmouth Street, Weſtminſter.
12th May, 1786.

PREFACE
BY THE
EDITOR.

His ſaltem accumulem donis, et fungar inani
Munere. VIRG.

THE CHARGE, contained in the following ſheets, was printed and publiſhed in the year 1751 by the learned Prelate, whoſe name it bears; and, together with the SERMONS and ANALOGY of the ſame Writer, both too well known to need a more particular deſcription, completes the collection of his Works. It has long been conſidered as a matter of Curioſity, on account of

its Scarceneſs; and it is equally curious on other accounts, its Subject, and the Calumny to which it gave occaſion, of repreſenting the Author as *addicted to Superſtition*, as *inclined to Popery*, and as *dying in the communion of the Church of Rome*. The improved Edition of the *Biographia Britannica*, now publiſhing under the care of Dr. *Kippis*, having unavoidably brought this Calumny again into notice; it may not be unſeaſonable to offer a few reflections in this place, by way of obviating any impreſſions that may hence ariſe, to the diſadvantage of ſo great a character as that of the late Biſhop BUTLER; referring thoſe, who deſire a more particular account of his Life, to the *third* Volume of the ſame entertaining work, printed in 1784. Art. BUTLER (*Joſeph*).

I. The

I. The principal deſign of the Biſhop, in his Charge, is to exhort his Clergy to "do their "part towards reviving a Practical "Senſe of Religion amongſt the "People committed to their care;" and, as one way of effecting this, to "inſtruct them in the *Importance* "*of External Religion*," or the uſefulneſs of Outward Obſervances in promoting Inward Piety. Now from the compound nature of Man, conſiſting of two parts, the Body and the Mind, together with the influence which theſe are found to have on one another, it follows, that the Religious Regards of ſuch a creature ought to be ſo framed, as to be in ſome way properly accommodated to both. A Religion which is purely ſpiritual, ſtripped of every thing that may affect the ſenſes, and

conſidered only as a Divine Philoſophy of the Mind, if it do not mount up into Enthuſiaſm, as has frequently been the caſe, often ſinks, after a few ſhort fervours, into Indifference: an abſtracted inviſible object, like that which Natural Religion offers, ceaſes to move or intereſt the heart; and ſomething further is wanting to bring it nearer, and render it more preſent to our view, than merely an intellectual contemplation. On the other hand, when, in order to remedy this inconvenience, recourſe is had to Inſtituted Forms and Ritual Injunctions; there is always danger leſt men be tempted to reſt entirely on theſe, and perſuade themſelves that a painful attention to ſuch obſervances will atone for the want of genuine Piety and Virtue. Yet ſurely there is a

way

way of ſteering ſafely between theſe two Extremes; of ſo conſulting both the parts of our Conſtitution, that the Body and the Mind may concur in rendering our religious ſervices acceptable to God, and at the ſame time uſeful to ourſelves. And what way can this be, but preciſely that which is recommended in the Charge; ſuch a cultivation of Outward as well as Inward Religion, that from both may reſult, what is the point chiefly to be laboured and at all events to be ſecured, a correſpondent Temper and Behaviour; or, in other words, ſuch an application of the Forms of Godlineſs as may be ſubſervient in promoting the Power and Spirit of it? No man who believes the Scriptures of the Old and New Teſtament, and underſtands what he believes,

but

but muſt know, that External Religion is as much enjoined, and conſtitutes as real a part of Revelation, as that which is Internal. The many Ceremonies in uſe among the Jews, in conſequence of a divine command; the Baptiſm of Water, as an emblem of moral purity; the eating and drinking of Bread and Wine, as ſymbols and repreſentations of the Body and Blood of Chriſt, required of Chriſtians, are proofs of this. On comparing theſe two parts of Religion together, one, it is immediately ſeen, is of much greater importance than the other; and, whenever they happen to interfere, is always to be preferred: But does it follow from hence, that therefore that other is of little or no importance, and, in caſes where there is no competition, may entirely

be neglected? Or rather is not the legitimate concluſion directly the reverſe, that nothing is to be looked upon as of little importance, which is of any uſe at all in preſerving upon our minds a ſenſe of the Divine Authority, which recals to our remembrance the obligations we are under, and helps to keep us, as the Scripture expreſſes it, *in the fear of the Lord all the day long* *? If, to adopt the inſtance mentioned in the Charge, the ſight of a CHURCH ſhould remind a man of ſome ſentiment of Piety; if, from the view of a material building dedicated to the ſervice of God, he ſhould be led to regard himſelf, his own Body, as a living *Temple of the Holy Ghoſt* †, and therefore no more than the other, to be prophaned or deſecrated by

* Prov. xxiii. 17. † 1 Cor. vi. 19.

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any thing that defileth or is impure; could it be truly ſaid of ſuch a one that he was Superſtitious, or miſtook the means of Religion for the end? If, to uſe another, and what has been thought a more obnoxious inſtance, taken from the Biſhop's practice, a Cross, erected in a place of Public Worſhip*, ſhould cauſe us to reflect on Him who died on a croſs for our ſalvation, and on the neceſſity of our *own dying to ſin* †, and of *crucifying the fleſh with its affections and luſts* ‡; would any worſe conſequences follow from ſuch ſentiments ſo excited, than if the ſame ſentiments had been excited by the view of a Picture, of the Crucifixion ſuppoſe, ſuch as is

* Dr. Butler, when Biſhop of *Briſtol*, put up a Croſs, a plain piece of marble inlaid, in the Chapel of his Epiſcopal Houſe at *Briſtol*, which at the time gave great offence.

† Rom. vi. 11. ‡ Gal. v. 24.

com-

commonly placed, and with this very deſign, in foreign Churches, and indeed in many of our own? Both the inſtances here adduced, it is very poſſible, may be far from being approved, even by thoſe who are under the moſt ſincere convictions of the importance of true Religion: and it is eaſy to conceive how open to ſcorn and cenſure they muſt be from others, who think they have a talent for ridicule, and have accuſtomed themſelves to regard all pretenſions to Piety as hypocritical or ſuperſtitious. But *Wiſdom is juſtified of her children* *. Religion is what it is, *whether* men *will hear, or whether they will forbear* ‡; and whatever in the ſmalleſt degree promotes its intereſts, and aſſiſts us in performing its commands, whether

* Matth. xi. 19. ‡ Ezek. ii. 5.

that aſſiſtance be derived from the medium of the Body or the Mind, ought to be eſteemed of great weight, and deſerving of our moſt ſerious attention.

However, be the danger of Superſtition what it may, no one was more ſenſible of that danger, or more in earneſt in maintaining that External Acts of themſelves are nothing, and that Moral Holineſs, as diſtinguiſhed from bodily obſervances of every kind, is that which conſtitutes the Eſſence of Religion, than Biſhop BUTLER. Not only the Charge itſelf, the whole intention of which is plainly nothing more than to inforce the neceſſity of *Practical Religion*, the reality as well as form, is a demonſtration of this, but many paſſages beſides to the ſame purpoſe, ſelected from his other writings.

writings. Take the two following as ſpecimens. In his *Analogy* he obſerves thus: "Though mankind have, "in all ages, been greatly prone "to place their Religion in pecu- "liar poſitive Rites, by way of equi- "valent for obedience to Moral Pre- "cepts; yet, without making any "compariſon at all between them, "the Nature of the Thing abun- "dantly ſhews all notions of that "kind to be utterly ſubverſive of "true Religion: as they are, more- "over, contrary to the whole gene- "ral tenor of Scripture; and like- "wiſe to the moſt expreſs particu- "lar declarations of it, that nothing "can render us accepted of God, "without Moral Virtue *." And to the ſame purpoſe in his *Sermon*,

* Analogy, Part II. Chap. 1.

preached before the Society for the Propagation of the Goſpel, in February 1738-9. "Indeed amongſt "creatures naturally formed for Re-"ligion, yet ſo much under the "power of Imagination, as men are, "Superſtition is an evil, which can "never be out of ſight. But even "againſt This, true Religion is a "great Security, and the only one. "True Religion takes up that place "in the mind, which Superſtition "would uſurp, and ſo leaves little "room for it; and likewiſe lays us "under the ſtrongeſt obligations to "oppoſe it. On the contrary, the "danger of Superſtition cannot but "be increaſed by the prevalence of "Irreligion: and by its general pre-"valence, the evil will be unavoida-"ble. For the common People, "wanting a Religion, will of courſe

"take

"take up with almoſt any Super-
"ſtition, which is thrown in their
"way: and, in proceſs of time,
"amidſt the infinite viciſſitudes of
"the political world, the leaders of
"Parties will certainly be able to
"ſerve themſelves of that Superſti-
"tion, whatever it be, which is
"getting ground; and will not fail
"to carry it to the utmoſt length
"their occaſions require. The ge-
"neral Nature of the Thing ſhews
"this: and Hiſtory and Fact con-
"firm it. It is therefore wonder-
"ful, thoſe people who ſeem to
"think there is but one evil in life,
"that of Superſtition, ſhould not
"ſee that Atheiſm and Profaneneſs
"muſt be the Introduction of it†."

He who can think and write in ſuch a manner, can never be ſaid to

† Serm. XVI. p. 339, 340. Ed. 4th, 1749.

miſtake

miſtake the nature of real Religion: And he, who, after ſuch proofs to the contrary, can perſiſt in aſſerting of ſo diſcreet and learned a perſon, that he was *addicted to Superſtition*, muſt himſelf be much a ſtranger both to Truth and Charity.

And here it may be worth our while to obſerve that the ſame excellent Prelate, who by one ſet of men was accuſed of *Superſtition*, on account of his *Charge*, has by another been repreſented as going into the oppoſite extreme of *Enthuſiaſm*, on account of his Two Diſcourſes *On the Love of God*. But the truth is, both objections are equally without foundation. He was neither Superſtitious nor an Enthuſiaſt: His mind was much too ſtrong, and his habits of thinking and reaſoning much too ſtrict and ſevere, to ſuffer him to

deſcend to the weakneſſes of either character. His Piety was at once fervent and rational. When impreſſed with a generous concern for the declining cauſe of Religion, he laboured to revive its dying intereſts; nothing he judged would be more effectual to that end, among creatures ſo much engaged with bodily things, and ſo apt to be affected with whatever ſtrongly ſolicits the ſenſes as men are, than a Religion of ſuch a frame as ſhould in its exerciſe require the joint exertions of the Body and the Mind. On the other hand, when penetrated with the dignity and importance of *the firſt and great commandment* *, Love to God, he ſet himſelf to enquire, what thoſe movements of the heart are, which are due to Him, the Au-

* Matth. xxii. 38.

thor

thor and Cauſe of all things; he found, in the cooleſt way of conſideration, that God is the natural Object of the *ſame* affections of Gratitude, Reverence, Fear, Deſire of Approbation, Truſt, and Dependence; the ſame affections in *kind*, though doubtleſs in a very diſproportionate *degree*, which any one would feel from contemplating a Perfect Character in a Creature, in which Goodneſs with Wiſdom and Power are ſuppoſed to be the predominant qualities, with the further circumſtance that this Creature was alſo his Governor and Friend. The ſubject is manifeſtly a real one; there is nothing in it fanciful or unreaſonable: This way of being affected towards God is Piety in the ſtricteſt ſenſe: This is Religion, conſidered as a habit of mind;

mind; a Religion ſuited to the nature and condition of Man.

II. From Superſtition to *Popery* the tranſition is eaſy: No wonder then, that, in the progreſs of detraction, the ſimple imputation of the former of theſe, with which the attack on the character of our Author was opened, ſhould be followed by the more aggravated imputation of the latter. Nothing, I think, can fairly be gathered in ſupport of ſuch a ſuggeſtion from the *Charge*, in which Popery is barely mentioned, and occaſionally only, and in a ſentence or two; yet even there, it ſhould be remarked, the Biſhop takes care to deſcribe the peculiar obſervances required by it, "ſome as in themſelves wrong and "ſuperſtitious, and others of them "as being made ſubſervient to the "purpoſes of Superſtition." With

reſpect to his other writings, any one at all converſant with them needs not to be told, that the matters treated of both in his *Sermons* and his *Analogy* did, none of them, directly lead him to conſider, and much leſs to combat, the opinions, whether relating to Faith or Worſhip, which are peculiar to the Church of Rome: It might therefore have ſo happened, yet without any juſt concluſion ariſing from thence of being himſelf inclined to favour thoſe opinions, that he had never mentioned, ſo much as incidentally, the ſubject of Popery at all. But fortunately for the reputation of the Biſhop, and to the eternal diſgrace of his calumniators, even this poor reſource is wanting to ſupport their malevolence. In his Sermon at St. Bride's before

the Lord Mayor in 1740, after having ſaid that "Our Laws and whole "Conſtitution go more upon ſup-"poſition of an Equality amongſt "Mankind, than the Conſtitution "and Laws of other Countries;" he goes on to obſerve, that "this "plainly requires, that more parti-"cular regard ſhould be had to the "Education of the lower people "Here, than in places, where they "are born Slaves of Power, and to "be made *Slaves of Superſtition* * :" meaning evidently in this place by the general term Superſtition, the particular errors of the Romaniſts. This is ſomething: but we have a ſtill plainer indication what his ſentiments concerning Popery really were, from another of his Additional

* Serm. XVII. p. 367.

Sermons, I mean that before the Houſe of Lords on June the 11th, 1747, the Anniverſary of his late Majeſty's Acceſſion. The paſſage alluded to is as follows, and my readers will not be diſpleaſed that I give it them at length. "The "value of our Religious Eſtabliſh-"ment ought to be very much "heightened in our eſteem, by con-"ſidering what it is a ſecurity from; "I mean that great Corruption of "Chriſtianity, Popery, which is ever "hard at work to bring us again "under its yoke. Whoever will "conſider the Popiſh Claims, to "the diſpoſal of the whole Earth, "as of divine right, to diſpenſe with "the moſt ſacred engagements, the "claims to ſupreme abſolute Au-"thority in Religion; in ſhort, the "general Claims which the Canon-

"iſts

" iſts expreſs by the words, *Pleni-*
" *tude of Power*—whoever, I ſay,
" will conſider Popery as it is pro-
" feſſed at *Rome*, may ſee, that it is
" manifeſt, open Uſurpation of all
" human and divine Authority. But
" even in thoſe Roman-catholick
" Countries where theſe monſtrous
" claims are not admitted, and the
" Civil Power does, in many re-
" ſpects, reſtrain the Papal; yet Per-
" ſecution is profeſſed, as it is abſo-
" lutely injoined by what is acknow-
" ledged to be their higheſt Autho-
" rity, a General Council, ſo called,
" with the Pope at the Head of it;
" and is practiſed in all of them, I
" think without exception, where
" it can be done ſafely. Thus they
" go on to ſubſtitute Force inſtead
" of Argument; and external Pro-
" feſſion made by Force inſtead of

" rea-

"reaſonable Conviction. And thus "Corruptions of the groſſeſt ſort "have been in vogue, for many "generations, in many parts of "Chriſtendom; and are ſo ſtill, even "where Popery obtains in its leaſt "abſurd Form: and their Antiquity "and wide Extent are inſiſted upon "as Proofs of their Truth; a kind "of Proof, which at beſt can only "be preſumptive, but which loſes "all its little weight, in proportion "as the long and large prevalence "of ſuch Corruptions have been "obtained by Force*." In another part of the ſame Sermon, where he is again ſpeaking of our Eccleſiaſtical Conſtitution, he reminds his Audience that it is to be valued, "not "becauſe it leaves us at liberty to "have as little Religion as we pleaſe,

* Serm. XX. p. 440—442.

"without

"without being accountable to Hu-
"man Judicatories; but becauſe it
"it exhibits to our view, and en-
"forces upon our Conſciences, ge-
"nuine Chriſtianity, free from the
"Superſtitions with which it is de-
"filed in other Countries;" which Superſtitions, he obſerves, "natu-
"turally tend to abate its Force†." The date of this Sermon ſhould here be attended to. It was preached in June, 1747; that is, four years before the delivery and publication of the Charge, which was in the year 1751; and exactly five years before the Author died, which was in June, 1752. We have then, in the paſſages now laid before the reader, a clear and unequivocal proof, brought down to within a few years of Biſhop BUTLER's death, that Po-

† P. 449.

pery

pery was held by him in the utmoſt abhorrence, and that he regarded it in no other light, than as *the great Corruption of Chriſtianity*, and a *manifeſt, open Uſurpation of all human and divine Authority*. The argument is deciſive; nor will any thing be of force to invalidate it, unleſs from ſome *after-act* during the ſhort remainder of the Biſhop's life, *beſides* that of delivering and printing his Charge, (which, after what I have ſaid here, and in the following Notes, I muſt have leave to conſider as affording no evidence at all of his inclination to Papiſtical Doctrines or Ceremonies) the contrary ſhall incontrovertibly appear.

III. One ſuch after-act however has been alleged, which would effectually demoliſh all that we have urged in behalf of our Prelate, were it

it true, as is pretended, that he *died in the Communion of the Church of Rome.* Had a ſtory of this ſort been invented and propagated by Papiſts, the wonder might have been leſs:

Hoc Ithacus velit, & magno mercentur Atridæ.

But to the reproach of Proteſtantiſm, the fabrication of this Calumny, for ſuch we ſhall find it, originated from among ourſelves. It is pretty remarkable that a circumſtance ſo extraordinary ſhould never have been divulged till the year 1767, fifteen years after the Biſhop's deceaſe. At that time Dr. THOMAS SECKER was Archbiſhop of CANTERBURY; who of all others was the moſt likely to know the truth or falſehood of the fact aſſerted, having been educated with our Author in his early youth, and having lived in a conſtant habit of intimacy

with him to the very time of his death. The good Archbiſhop was not ſilent on this occaſion: with a virtuous indignation he ſtood forth to protect the poſthumous character of his Friend; and in a public Newſpaper, under the ſignature of *Miſopſeudes*, called upon his accuſers to ſupport what they had advanced by whatever proofs they could. No proof, however, nor any thing like a proof, appeared in reply; and every man of ſenſe and candour at that time was perfectly convinced the aſſertion was entirely groundleſs*. As a further confirmation of the rectitude of this judgment, it may not be amiſs to mention,

* I have not been able to procure any of the printed papers, in which Biſhop Butler was accuſed of having died a Papiſt, or Archbiſhop Secker's replies to them; though I well remember to have read both, when they firſt appeared in the year 1767.

there

there is yet in exiſtence a ſtrong *preſumptive* argument at leaſt in its favour, drawn from the teſtimony of thoſe who attended our Author in the ſickneſs of which he died. The laſt days of this excellent Prelate were paſſed at *Bath*; Dr. NATHANIEL FORSTER, his Chaplain, being continually with him; and for one day, and at the very end of his illneſs, Dr. MARTIN BENSON alſo, the then Biſhop of GLOUCESTER, who ſhortened his own life in his pious haſte to viſit his dying Friend. Both theſe perſons conſtantly wrote Letters to Dr. SECKER, then Biſhop of OXFORD, containing accounts of Biſhop BUTLER's declining health, and of the ſymptoms and progreſs of his diſorder, which, as was conjectured, ſoon terminated in his death. Theſe Letters, which are ſtill preſerved in

the *Lambeth* Library, by the indulgence of our preſent moſt worthy Metropolitan, I have read; and not the ſlendereſt argument can be collected from them, in juſtification of the ridiculous ſlander we are here conſidering. If at that awful ſeaſon the Biſhop was not known to have expreſſed any opinion, tending to ſhew his *diſlike* to Popery; neither was he known to have ſaid any thing, that could at all be conſtrued in *approbation* of it: and the natural preſumption is, that whatever ſentiments he had formerly entertained concerning that corrupt ſyſtem of Religion, he continued to entertain them to the laſt. The truth is, neither the word nor the idea of Popery ſeems once to have occurred either to the Biſhop himſelf, or to thoſe who watched his parting moments:

moments: Their thoughts were otherwiſe engaged. His diſorder had reduced him to ſuch debility, as to render him incapable of ſpeaking much or long on any ſubject: the few bright intervals that occurred were paſſed in a ſtate of the utmoſt tranquillity and compoſure; and in that compoſure he expired. *Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright; for the End of that man is Peace* *. *Let me die the death of the Righteous, and let my laſt end be like His* †!

Out of pure reſpect for the virtues of a man, whom I had never the happineſs of knowing, or even ſeeing, but from whoſe writings I have received the greateſt benefit and illumination, and which I have reaſon to be thankful to Providence for

* Pſ. xxxvii. 37. † Num. xxiii. 10.

having

having early thrown in my way; I have adventured, in what I have now offered to the public, to ſtep forth in his defence, and to vindicate his honeſt fame from the attacks of thoſe, who, with the vain hope of bringing down ſuperior characters to their own level, are for ever at work in detracting from their juſt praiſe. For the literary reputation of Biſhop BUTLER, it ſtands too high in the opinion of the world, to incur the danger of any diminution: but this in truth is the leaſt of his excellencies. He was more than a good Writer, he was a good Man; and, what is an addition even to this eulogy, he was a ſincere Chriſtian. His whole ſtudy was directed to the Knowledge and Practice of ſound Morality and true Religion: theſe he adorned by his Life,

and

and has recommended to future ages in his Writings; in which, if my judgment be of any avail, he has done eſſential ſervice to both, as much, perhaps, as any ſingle perſon, ſince the extraordinary gifts of *the word of Wiſdom* and *the word of Knowledge** have been withdrawn.

In what follows I propoſe to give a ſhort account of the Biſhop's MORAL and RELIGIOUS SYSTEMS, as theſe are collected from his Works.

I. His way of treating the ſubject of MORALS is to be gathered from the Volume of his SERMONS, and particularly from the three firſt, and from the Preface to that Volume.

"There is," as our Author with ſingular ſagacity has obſerved, "a

* 1 Cor. xii. 8.

"much

"much more exact correſpondence "between the Natural and Moral "World, than we are apt to take "notice of*." The inward Frame of Man anſwers to his outward Condition: the ſeveral propenſities, paſſions, and affections, implanted in our hearts by the Author of Nature, are in a peculiar manner adapted to the circumſtances of life in which He hath placed us. This general obſervation, properly purſued, leads to ſeveral important concluſions. The original internal Conſtitution of Man, compared with his external Condition, enables us to diſcern what Courſe of Action and Behaviour that Conſtitution leads to, what is our Duty reſpecting that Condition, and furniſhes us beſides with the moſt powerful Arguments to the Practice of it.

*Serm. VI.

What the Inward Frame and Conſtitution of Man is, is a queſtion of Fact; to be determined, as other Facts are, from Experience, from our internal Feelings and external Senſes, and from the Teſtimony of others. Whether Human Nature and the Circumſtances in which it is placed might not have been ordered otherwiſe, is foreign to our enquiry, as well as none of our concern: Our Province is, taking both of theſe as they are, and viewing the connexion between them, from that connexion to diſcover, if we can, what Courſe of Action is fitted to that Nature and thoſe Circumſtances. From contemplating the Bodily Senſes, and the organs or inſtruments adapted to them, we learn that the Eye was given to ſee with, the Ears to hear with. In like

manner, from conſidering our Inward Perceptions and the final cauſes of them, we collect that the feeling of Shame, for inſtance, was given to prevent the doing of things ſhameful; Compaſſion, to carry us to relieve others in diſtreſs; Anger, to reſiſt ſudden violence offered to ourſelves. If, continuing our enquiries in this way, it ſhould at length appear, that the Nature, the whole Nature, of Man leads him to and is fitted for that particular courſe of behaviour, which we uſually diſtinguiſh by the name of Virtue; we are authorized to conclude, that Virtue is the Law we are born under, that it was ſo intended by the Author of our Being; and we are bound by the moſt intimate of all obligations, a regard to our own higheſt Intereſt and Happineſs, to

conform

conform to it in all ſituations and events.

Human Nature is not ſimple and uniform, but made up of ſeveral parts; and we can have no juſt idea of it as a Syſtem or Conſtitution, unleſs we take into our view the reſpects and relations which theſe parts have to each other. As the Body is not one member, but many; ſo our Inward Structure conſiſts of various inſtincts, appetites, and propenſions. Thus far there is no difference between Human Creatures and Brutes. But beſides theſe common paſſions and affections, there is another principle, peculiar to Mankind, that of Conſcience, Moral Senſe, Reflection, call it what you pleaſe, by which they are enabled to review their whole conduct, to approve of ſome actions in themſelves,

ſelves, and to diſapprove of others. That this principle will of courſe have *ſome* influence on our behaviour, at leaſt at times, will hardly be diſputed: but the particular influence which it *ought* to have, the preciſe place in our internal frame that is aſſigned it by Him who placed it there, is a point of the utmoſt conſequence in itſelf, and on the determination of which the very hinge of our Author's Moral Syſtem turns. If the faculty here ſpoken of be, indeed, what it is aſſerted to be, in nature and kind *ſuperior* to every other paſſion and affection; if it be given, not merely that it may exert its force occaſionally, or as our preſent humour or fancy may diſpoſe us, but that it may at all times exerciſe an uncontroulable Authority and Government over all

the reſt; it will then follow that, in order to complete the idea of Human Nature, as a Syſtem, we muſt not only take in each particular bias, propenſion, inſtinct, which are ſeen to belong to it, but we muſt add beſides the principle of Conſcience, together with the ſubjection that is due to it from all the other appetites and paſſions: juſt as the idea of a Civil Conſtitution is formed, not barely from enumerating the ſeveral members and ranks of which it is compoſed, but from theſe conſidered as acting in various degrees of ſubordination to each other, and all under the direction of the ſame Supreme Authority, whether that Authority be veſted in one perſon or more.

The view here given of the Internal Conſtitution of Man, and of the Supre-

Supremacy of Conſcience, agreeably to the conceptions of Biſhop BUTLER, enables us to comprehend the force of that expreſſion, common to him and the antient Moraliſts, that Virtue conſiſts in *following Nature.* The meaning cannot be, that it conſiſts in acting agreeably to that propenſity of our Nature which happens to be the ſtrongeſt; or which propels us towards certain objects, without any regard to the means by which they are to be obtained: But the meaning muſt be, that Virtue conſiſts in the due regulation and ſubjection of all the other appetites and affections to the Superior Faculty of Conſcience; from a conformity to which alone our actions are properly *natural,* or correſpondent to the nature, to the whole nature, of ſuch an agent as Man. From hence too it appears,

appears, that the Author of our Frame is by no means indifferent to Virtue and Vice, or has left us at liberty to act at random, as humour or appetite may prompt us; but that every man has the Rule of Right within him; a Rule attended in the very notion of it with Authority, and ſuch as has the force of a Direction and a Command from Him, who made us what we are, what Courſe of Behaviour is ſuited to our Nature, and which He expects that we ſhould follow. This Moral Faculty implies alſo a pre-ſentiment and apprehenſion, that the Judgment which it paſſes on our actions, conſidered as of good or ill deſert, will hereafter be confirmed by the unerring Judgment of God; when Virtue and Happineſs, Vice and Miſery, whoſe ideas are now ſo

cloſely

cloſely connected, ſhall be indiſſolubly united, and the Divine Government be found to correſpond in the moſt exact proportion to the Nature He has given us. Laſtly, this juſt Prerogative or Supremacy of Conſcience it is, which Mr. POPE has deſcribed in his *Univerſal Prayer*, though perhaps he may have expreſſed it rather *too* ſtrongly, where he ſays,

" What Conſcience dictates to be done,
" Or warns me not to do,
" This teach me *more than* Hell to ſhun,
" That *more than* Heaven purſue."

The reader will obſerve, that this way of treating the ſubject of Morals by an appeal to *Facts* does not at all interfere with that other way, adopted by Dr. *Samuel Clarke* and others, which begins with enquiring into the *Relations* and *Fitneſſes of Things*,

Things, but rather illuſtrates and confirms it. That there are eſſential differences in the qualities of human actions, eſtabliſhed by nature, and that this *natural* difference of things, prior to and independent of all *Will*, creates a natural *fitneſs* in the agent to act agreeably to it, ſeems as little to be denied, as that there is the *moral* difference before explained, from which we approve and feel a pleaſure in what is right, and conceive a diſtaſte to what is wrong. Still however, when we are endeavouring to eſtabliſh either this moral or that natural difference, it ought never to be forgotten, or rather it will require to be diſtinctly ſhewn, that both of theſe when traced up to their ſource, ſuppoſe an intelligent Author of Nature and moral Ruler of the World; who originally appointed

theſe differences, and by ſuch an appointment has ſignified his WILL that we ſhould conform to them, as the only effectual method of ſecuring our HAPPINESS on the whole under his government. And of this conſideration our Prelate himſelf was not unmindful; as may be collected from many expreſſions in different parts of his writings, and particularly from the following paſſages in his xith Sermon. "It "may be allowed, without any pre-"judice to the cauſe of Virtue and "Religion, that our ideas of Hap-"pineſs and Miſery are of all our "ideas the neareſt and moſt impor-"tant to us; that they will, nay, if "you pleaſe, that they ought to "prevail over thoſe of Order, and "Beauty, and Harmony, and Pro-"portion, if there ſhould ever be,

"as

" as it is impoſſible there ever ſhould " be, any Inconſiſtence between " them." And again, " Though " Virtue or moral Rectitude does " indeed conſiſt in affection to and " purſuit of what is right and good, " as ſuch; yet, when we ſit down " in a cool hour, we can neither " juſtify to ourſelves this or any " other purſuit, till we are convinced " that it will be for our Happineſs, " or at leaſt not contrary to it *."

Beſides the general Syſtem of Morality opened above, our Author in his Volume of Sermons has ſtated with accuracy the difference between Self-Love and Benevolence; in oppoſition to thoſe who on one hand make the whole of Virtue to conſiſt in Benevolence †, and to

* Serm. XI. p. 229.

† See the 2d Diſſertation *On the Nature of Virtue*, at the end of the *Analogy*.

thoſe, who on the other aſſert that every particular affection and action is reſolvable into Self-Love. In combating theſe opinions, he has ſhewn, I think unanſwerably, that there are the ſame kind of indications in Human Nature, that we were made to promote the happineſs of others, as that we were made to promote our own: that it is no juſt objection to this, that we have diſpoſitions to do *evil* to *others* as well as good; for we have alſo diſpoſitions to do evil as well as good to *ourſelves*, to our own moſt important intereſts even in this life, for the ſake of gratifying a preſent paſſion: that the thing to be lamented is, not that men have too great a regard to their own real good, but that they have not enough: that Benevolence is not more at variance with or unfriendly

to

to Self-Love, than any other particular affection is: and that by conſulting the happineſs of others a man is ſo far from *leſſening* his own, that the very endeavour to do ſo, though he ſhould fail in the accompliſhment, is a ſource of the higheſt ſatisfaction and peace of mind*. He has alſo, in paſſing, animadverted on the Philoſopher of *Malmſbury*, who in his book *Of Human Nature* has advanced, as diſcoveries in Moral Science, that Benevolence is only the Love of Power, and Compaſſion the Fear of future Calamity to Ourſelves. And this our Author has done, not ſo much with the deſign of expoſing the falſe reaſoning of Mr. *Hobbes*, but becauſe on ſo perverſe an account of Human Nature he

* See Sermons I. and XI. and the Preface to the Volume of Sermons.

has

has raiſed a Syſtem, ſubverſive of all Juſtice and Honeſty *.

II. The RELIGIOUS Syſtem of Biſhop BUTLER is chiefly to be collected from the Treatiſe, entitled *The Analogy of Religion, Natural and Revealed, to the Conſtitution and Courſe of Nature.*

All things are double one againſt another, and God hath made nothing imperfect †. On this ſingle obſervation of the Son of *Sirach*, the whole Fabric of our Prelate's defence of Religion, in his *Analogy*, is raiſed. Inſtead of indulging to idle Speculations, how the World might poſſibly have been better than it is; or, forgetful of the difference between Hypotheſis and Fact, attempting to explain the Divine Oeco-

* See the Notes to Sermon I. and V.

† Ecclus. xlii. 24.

nomy

nomy with reſpect to intelligent creatures from pre-conceived notions of his own; he firſt inquires what the Conſtitution of Nature, as made known to us in the way of experiment, actually is; and from this, now ſeen and acknowledged, he endeavours to form a judgment of that larger Conſtitution, which Religion diſcovers to us. If the Diſpenſation of Providence we are now under, conſidered as inhabitants of This World, and having a Temporal intereſt to ſecure in it, be found, on examination, to be analogous to, and of a piece with, that further Diſpenſation, which relates to us as deſigned for Another World, in which we have an Eternal intereſt, depending on our behaviour here; if both may be traced up to the ſame General Laws, and appear to be

be carried on according to the ſame Plan of Adminiſtration; the fair Preſumption is, that both proceed from one and the ſame Author. And if the principal parts Objected to in this latter Diſpenſation be ſimilar and of the ſame kind with what we certainly Experience under the former; the Objections, being clearly inconcluſive in one caſe, becauſe contradicted by plain Fact, muſt, in all reaſon, be allowed to be inconcluſive alſo in the other.

This way of arguing from what is acknowledged to what is diſputed, from things known to other things that reſemble them, from that part of the divine eſtabliſhment which is expoſed to our view to that more important one which lies beyond it, is on all hands confeſſed to be juſt. By this method Sir Iſaac Newton has

has unfolded the Syſtem of Nature; by the ſame method Biſhop Butler has explained the Syſtem of Grace, and thus, to uſe the words of a writer, whom I quote with pleaſure, "has formed and concluded a happy "alliance between Faith and Philo- "ſophy *."

And although the argument from Analogy be allowed to be imperfect, and by no means ſufficient to ſolve all difficulties reſpecting the Government of God, and the deſigns of his Providence with regard to mankind; (a degree of knowledge, which we are not furniſhed with faculties for attaining, at leaſt in the preſent ſtate) yet ſurely it is of importance to learn from it, that the Natural and Moral World are intimately connected, and Parts of one ſtu-

* *Mainwaring's* Diſſertation, prefixed to his Volume of Sermons.

pendous Whole or Syſtem; and that the chief Objections, which are brought againſt Religion, may be urged with equal force againſt the conſtitution and courſe of Nature, where they are certainly falſe in fact. And this information we may derive from the work before us; the proper deſign of which, it may be of uſe to obſerve, is not to prove the truth of Religion, either natural or revealed, but to confirm that proof, already known, by conſiderations from Analogy.

After this account of the method of reaſoning employed by our Author, let us now advert to his manner of applying it, Firſt to the ſubject of Natural Religion, and Secondly to that of Revealed.

1. The foundation of all our hopes and fears is a Future Life; and with this the Treatiſe begins. Neither the

the Reaſon of the Thing, nor the Analogy of Nature, according to Biſhop BUTLER, give ground for imagining, that the unknown event, Death, will be our deſtruction. The ſtates in which we have formerly exiſted, in the Womb and in Infancy, are not more different from each other than from that of Mature Age in which we now exiſt: therefore that we ſhall continue to exiſt hereafter, in a ſtate as different from the preſent as the preſent is from thoſe through which we have paſſed already, is a Preſumption favoured by the Analogy of Nature. All that we know from Reaſon concerning Death, is the effects it has upon Animal Bodies: and the frequent inſtances among Men of the Intellectual Powers continuing in high health and vigour, at the very time when a

mortal diſeaſe is on the point of putting an end to all the Powers of Senſation, induce us to hope that it may have no effect at all on the Human Soul, not even ſo much as to ſuſpend the exerciſe of its faculties: though if it have, the Suſpenſion of a Power by no means implies its Extinction, as Sleep or a Swoon may convince us *.

The probability of a Future State once granted, an important queſtion ariſes, How beſt to ſecure our Intereſt in that State. We find from what paſſes daily before us, that the Conſtitution of Nature admits of Miſery as well as Happineſs; that both of theſe are the Conſequences of our own Actions; and theſe Conſequences we are enabled to foreſee. Therefore that our Happineſs

* Part I. Chapter 1.

or Miſery in a future world may depend on our own Actions alſo, and that Rewards or Puniſhments hereafter may follow our good or ill behaviour here; is but an appointment of the ſame ſort with what we experience under the divine Government, according to the regular courſe of Nature *.

This ſuppoſition is confirmed from another circumſtance, that the Natural Government of God, under which we now live, is alſo Moral; in which Rewards and Puniſhments are the conſequences of Actions, conſidered as virtuous and vitious. Not that every man is rewarded or puniſhed here in exact proportion to his deſert; for the eſſential Tendencies of Virtue and Vice to

* Ch. 2.

pro-

produce happineſs and the contrary are often hindered from taking effect from accidental cauſes. However there are plainly the rudiments and beginnings of a righteous adminiſtration to be diſcerned in the Conſtitution of Nature: from whence we are led to expect, that theſe accidental hindrances will one day be removed, and the rule of diſtributive Juſtice obtain completely in a more perfect ſtate *.

The Moral Government of God, thus eſtabliſhed, implies in the notion of it ſome ſort of Trial, or a moral poſſibility of acting wrong as well as right, in thoſe who are the ſubjects of it. And the doctrine of Religion, that the preſent life is in fact a ſtate of Probation for a future one, is rendered credible, from its

* Ch. 3.

being

being analogous throughout to the general conduct of Providence towards us with reſpect to this world; in which Prudence is neceſſary to ſecure our temporal intereſt, juſt as we are taught that Virtue is neceſſary to ſecure our eternal intereſt; and both are truſted to ourſelves*.

But the preſent life is not merely a ſtate of Probation, implying in it difficulties and danger; it is alſo a ſtate of Diſcipline and Improvement; and that both in our temporal and religious capacity. Thus Childhood is a ſtate of Diſcipline for Youth; Youth for Manhood, and that for old Age. Strength of body, and maturity of underſtanding, are acquired by degrees; and neither of them without continual exerciſe and attention on our part, not only

* Ch. 4.

in

in the beginning of life, but through the whole courſe of it. So again with reſpect to our religious concerns, the preſent world is fitted to be, and to good men is in event, a ſtate of Diſcipline and Improvement for a future one. The ſeveral paſſions and propenſions, implanted in our hearts, incline us, in a multitude of inſtances, to forbidden pleaſures: this inward infirmity is encreaſed by various ſnares and temptations, perpetually occurring from without: hence ariſes the neceſſity of recollection and ſelf-government, of withſtanding the calls of appetite, and forming our minds to Habits of Piety and Virtue: Habits of which we are capable, and which to creatures in a ſtate of moral imperfection, and fallen from their original integrity, muſt

be of the greateſt uſe, as an additional ſecurity, over and above the principle of Conſcience, from the dangers to which we are expoſed*.

Nor is the Credibility here given, by the Analogy of Nature, to the general doctrine of Religion, deſtroyed or weakened by any notions concerning Neceſſity. Of itſelf it is a mere word, the ſign of an abſtract idea; and as much requires an Agent, that is, a neceſſary Agent, in order to effect any thing, as Freedom requires a free Agent. Admitting it to be ſpeculatively true, if conſidered as influencing practice, it is the ſame as falſe: for it is matter of experience, that, with regard to our preſent intereſt, and as inhabitants of this world, we are treated as if we were free; and therefore

* Ch. 5.

the Analogy of Nature leads us to conclude, that, with regard to our future intereſt, and as deſigned for another world, we ſhall be treated as free alſo. Nor does the opinion of Neceſſity, ſuppoſing it poſſible, at all affect either the general proof of Religion, or its external evidence †.

Still objections may be made againſt the Wiſdom and Goodneſs of the Divine Government, to which Analogy, which can only ſhew the truth or credibility of Facts, affords no anſwer. Yet even here Analogy is of uſe, if it ſuggeſt that the Divine Government is a Scheme or Syſtem, and not a number of unconnected acts, and that this Syſtem is alſo above our comprehenſion. Now the Government of the Natural World appears

† Ch. 6.

to

to be a Syſtem of this kind; with Parts, related to each other, and together compoſing a Whole; in which Syſtem Ends are brought about by the uſe of Means, many of which Means, before experience, would have been ſuſpected to have had a quite contrary tendency; which is carried on by General Laws, ſimilar cauſes uniformly producing ſimilar effects; the utility of which General Laws, and the inconveniences which would probably ariſe from the occaſional or even ſecret ſuſpenſion of them, we are in ſome ſort enabled to diſcern*; but of the Whole we are incompetent judges, becauſe of the ſmall Part which comes within our view. Reaſoning then from what we know, it is highly credible, that the Go-

* See a Treatiſe on *Divine Benevolence*, by Dr. Thomas Balguy; Part II.

vernment of the Moral World is a Syſtem alſo, carried on by General Laws, and in which Ends are accompliſhed by the intervention of Means; and that both Conſtitutions, the Natural and the Moral, are ſo connected, as to form together but One Scheme. But of this Scheme, as of that of the Natural World taken alone, we are not qualified to judge, on account of the mutual reſpect of the ſeveral Parts, to each other and to the Whole, and our own incapacity to ſurvey the Whole, or, with accuracy, any ſingle Part. All objections therefore to the Wiſdom and Goodneſs of the Divine Government may be founded merely on our Ignorance*; and to ſuch objec-

* *The Ignorance of Man* is a favourite doctrine with Biſhop Butler. It occurs again in the ſecond Part of the

objections our Ignorance is the proper, and a ſatisfactory, Anſwer*.

2. The chief difficulties concerning Natural Religion being now removed, our Author proceeds, in the next place, to that which is Revealed; and as an introduction to an enquiry into the Credibility of Chriſtianity, begins with the conſideration of its Importance.

The Importance of Chriſtianity appears in two reſpects. Firſt, in its being a Republication of Natural Religion, in its native ſimplicity, with authority, and with circumſtances of advantage; aſcertaining, in many inſtances of moment, what before was only probable, and

the Analogy; it makes the ſubject of his Fifteenth Sermon; and we meet with it in his Charge. Whether ſometimes it be not carried to a length, which is exceſſive, may, perhaps, admit of doubt.

* Ch. 7.

particularly confirming the doctrine of a Future State of Rewards and Puniſhments. Secondly, as revealing a new Diſpenſation of Providence, originating, according to the deſcription of it in Scripture, from the pure Love and Mercy of God, and conducted by the Mediation of his Son, and the Guidance of his Spirit, for the Recovery and Salvation of Mankind, repreſented in a ſtate of Apoſtacy and Ruin. This account of Chriſtianity being admitted to be juſt, and the diſtinct Offices of theſe three Divine Perſons being once diſcovered to us, we are as much obliged in point of duty to acknowledge the relations we ſtand in to the Son and Holy Ghoſt, as our Mediator and Sanctifier, as we are obliged in point of duty to acknowledge the relation we ſtand in

to

to God the Father; although the two former of theſe relations be learnt from Revelation only, and in the laſt we are inſtructed by the light of Nature; the obligation in either caſe ariſing from the Offices themſelves, and not at all depending on the manner in which they are made known to us*.

The Preſumptions againſt Revelation in general are, that it is not diſcoverable by reaſon, that it is unlike to what is ſo diſcovered, and that it was introduced and ſupported by Miracles. But in a Scheme ſo large as that of the Univerſe, unbounded in extent and everlaſting in duration, there muſt of neceſſity be numberleſs circumſtances which are beyond the reach of our faculties to diſcern, and which can only be known

* Part II. Chapter I.

by

by divine illumination. And both in the Natural and Moral Government of the World, under which we live, we find many things unlike one to another, and therefore ought not to wonder if the ſame unlikeneſs obtain between things viſible and inviſible: although it be far from true, that Revealed Religion is entirely unlike the Conſtitution of Nature, as Analogy may teach us. Nor is there any thing incredible in Revelation, conſidered as Miraculous; whether Miracles be ſuppoſed to have been performed at the beginning of the world, or after a courſe of Nature has been eſtabliſhed. Not *at the beginning of the world*; for then there was either no courſe of Nature at all, or a power muſt have been exerted totally different from what that courſe

is

is at preſent: All men and animals cannot have been born, as they are now; but a pair of each ſort muſt have been produced at firſt, in a way altogether unlike to that in which they have been ſince produced; unleſs we affirm, that men and animals have exiſted from eternity in an endleſs ſucceſſion: One Miracle therefore at leaſt there muſt have been, at the beginning of the world, or at the time of Man's Creation. Not *after the ſettlement of a courſe of Nature*, on account of Miracles being contrary to that courſe, or, in other words, contrary to Experience: for in order to know whether Miracles, worked in atteſtation of a Divine Religion, be contrary to Experience or not, we ought to be acquainted with other caſes, ſimilar or parallel to

thoſe, in which Miracles are alleged to have been wrought. But where ſhall we find ſuch ſimilar or parallel caſes? The World which we inhabit affords none: We know of no extraordinary Revelations from God to Man, but thoſe recorded in the old and new Teſtament; all of which were eſtabliſhed by Miracles: It cannot therefore be ſaid that Miracles are incredible, becauſe contrary to Experience, when all the Experience we have is in favour of Miracles, and on the ſide of Religion*. Beſides, in reaſoning concerning Miracles, they ought not to be compared with common natural events, but with uncommon appearances, ſuch as Comets, Magnet-

* See a Pamphlet, entitled *Remarks on Mr. Hume's Eſſay on the Natural Hiſtory of Religion*, § 5. And the 6th of Doctor *Powell's* Diſcourſes.

iſm,

iſm, Electricity; which to one acquainted only with the uſual Phænomena of Nature, and the common powers of Matter, muſt, before proof of their actual exiſtence, be thought incredible †.

The Preſumptions againſt Revelation in general being diſpatched, Objections againſt the Chriſtian Revelation in particular, againſt the Scheme of it, as diſtinguiſhed from objections againſt its Evidence, are conſidered next. Now, ſuppoſing a Revelation to be really given, it is highly probable beforehand, that it muſt contain many things, appearing to us liable to objections. The acknowledged Diſpenſation of Nature is very different from what we ſhould have expected; reaſoning then from

† Ch. 2.

Analogy, the Revealed Diſpenſation, it is credible, would be alſo different. Nor are we in any ſort judges at what time, or in what degree, or manner, it is fit or expedient for God to inſtruct us, in things confeſſedly of the greateſt uſe, either by natural reaſon, or by ſupernatural information. Thus arguing on ſpeculation only, and without experience, it would ſeem very unlikely that ſo important a Remedy as that provided by Chriſtianity for the recovery of mankind from a ſtate of ruin, ſhould have been for ſo many ages withheld; and, when at laſt vouchſafed, ſhould be imparted to ſo few; and, after it has been imparted, ſhould be attended with obſcurity and doubt. And juſt ſo we might have argued, before experience, concerning the Remedies

dies provided in nature for Bodily Diſeaſes, to which by nature we are expoſed: for many of theſe were unknown to mankind for a number of ages; are known but to few now; ſome important ones probably not diſcovered yet; and thoſe which are, neither certain in their application, nor univerſal in their uſe: And the ſame mode of reaſoning that would lead us to expect they ſhould have been ſo, would lead us to expect that the neceſſity of them ſhould have been ſuperſeded, by there being no Diſeaſes; as the neceſſity of the Chriſtian Scheme, it may be thought, might alſo have been ſuperſeded, by preventing the fall of man, ſo that he ſhould not have ſtood in need of a Redeemer at all *.

* Ch. 3.

As to Objections againſt the Wiſdom and Goodneſs of Chriſtianity, the ſame Anſwer may be applied to them as was to the like objections againſt the Conſtitution of Nature. For here alſo, Chriſtianity is a Scheme or Oeconomy, compoſed of various parts, forming a Whole; in which Scheme Means are uſed for the accompliſhing of Ends; and which is conducted by General Laws: of all of which we know as little as we do of the Conſtitution of Nature. And the ſeeming want of Wiſdom or Goodneſs in this Syſtem is to be aſcribed to the ſame cauſe, as the like appearances of defects in the Natural Syſtem; our inability to diſcern the whole Scheme, and our ignorance of the relation of thoſe parts which are diſcernible to others beyond our view.

The

The Objections againſt Chriſtianity as a matter of Fact, and againſt the Wiſdom and Goodneſs of it, having been obviated together, the chief of them are now to be conſidered diſtinctly. One of theſe, which is levelled againſt the entire Syſtem itſelf, is of this ſort: The Reſtoration of Mankind, repreſented in Scripture as the great deſign of the Goſpel, is deſcribed as requiring a long ſeries of means, and perſons, and diſpenſations, before it can be brought to its completion; whereas the whole ought to have been effected at once. Now every thing we ſee in the courſe of Nature ſhews the folly of this objection. For in the natural courſe of Providence, Ends are brought about by Means, not operating immediately and at once,

but deliberately and in a way of progreſſion; one thing being ſubſervient to another, this to ſomewhat further. The change of ſeaſons, the ripening of fruits, the growth of vegetable and animal bodies, are inſtances of this. And therefore that the ſame progreſſive method ſhould be followed in the diſpenſation of Chriſtianity, as is obſerved in the common diſpenſation of Providence, is a reaſonable expectation, juſtified by the Analogy of Nature*.

Another circumſtance objected to in the Chriſtian Scheme is the appointment of a Mediator, and the ſaving of the world through Him. But the viſible Government of God being actually adminiſtered in this way, or by the Mediation and In-

* Ch. 4.

ſtrumentality

ſtrumentality of others; there can be no General Preſumption againſt an appointment of this kind, againſt his inviſible Government being exerciſed in the ſame manner. We have ſeen already that, with regard to ourſelves, this viſible Government is carried on by Rewards and Puniſhments; for Happineſs and Miſery are the conſequences of our own actions, conſidered as virtuous and vicious, and theſe conſequences we are enabled to foreſee. It might have been imagined, before conſulting Experience, that after we had rendered ourſelves liable to Miſery by our own ill conduct, ſorrow for what was paſt, and behaving well for the future, would, alone and of themſelves, have exempted us from the deſerved Puniſhment, and reſtored us to the Divine Favour. But

the Fact is otherwiſe; and real Reformation is often found to be of no avail, ſo as to ſecure the criminal from poverty, ſickneſs, infamy, and death, the never-failing attendants on vice and extravagance, exceeding a certain degree. By the courſe of Nature then it appears, God does not always pardon a ſinner on his Repentance. Yet there is Proviſion made, even in Nature, that the Miſeries, which men bring on themſelves by unlawful indulgencies, may in many caſes be mitigated, and in ſome removed; partly by extraordinary exertions of the Offender Himſelf, but more eſpecially and frequently by the Intervention of Others, who voluntarily, and from motives of compaſſion, ſubmit to labour and ſorrow, ſuch as produce long and laſting inconveniences to themſelves,

as

as the means of reſcuing another from the wretched effects of former imprudences. Vicarious Puniſhment, therefore, or one perſon's ſufferings contributing to the relief of another, is a providential diſpoſition, in the Oeconomy of Nature*: And it ought not to be matter of ſurprize, if by a method analogous to this we be redeemed from ſin and miſe-

* Dr. Arthur Aſhley Sykes, in what he is pleaſed to call *The Scripture-Doctrine of Redemption* (ſee his Obſervations on the Texts cited in his firſt Chapter, and alſo in Chapters the fifth and ſixth) oppoſes what is here advanced by Biſhop Butler; quoting his words, but without mentioning his name. If what is ſaid above be not thought a ſufficient anſwer to the objections of this writer, the reader may do well to conſult a Charge *On the Uſe and Abuſe of Philoſophy in the ſtudy of Religion*, by the late Dr. Powell; who ſeems to me to have had the obſervations of Dr. Sykes in his view, where he is confuting the reaſonings of certain philoſophizing Divines againſt the doctrine of the Atonement. Powell's Diſcourſes, Charge III. p. 342—348. See alſo *Eſſays on Scripture Metaphors, Divine Juſtice and Mercy, and the Doctrine of Satisfaction*, by W. Ludlam, B. D. 1785; where the improper language introduced into theſe ſubjects by ſome well-meaning authors is juſtly cenſured.

ry, in the Oeconomy of Grace. That mankind at preſent are in a ſtate of degradation, different from that in which they were originally created, is the very ground of the Chriſtian Revelation, as contained in the Scriptures. Whether we acquieſce in the account, that our being placed in ſuch a ſtate is owing to the Crime of our Firſt Parents, or chuſe to aſcribe it to any other cauſe, it makes no difference as to our Condition: the vice and unhappineſs of the world are ſtill there, notwithſtanding all our ſuppoſitions; nor is it Chriſtianity that hath put us into this ſtate. We learn alſo from the ſame Scriptures, what Experience and the uſe of Expiatory Sacrifices from the moſt early times might have taught us, that Repentance alone is not ſufficient to prevent the fatal conſequences of paſt tranſgreſſions:

But

But that ſtill there is room for Mercy, and that Repentance ſhall be available, though not of itſelf, yet through the Mediation of a Divine Perſon, the Meſſiah; who, from the ſublimeſt principles of compaſſion, when we were *dead in treſpaſſes and ſins**, ſuffered and died, the innocent for the guilty, *the juſt for the unjuſt* †, that we *might have redemption through his Blood, even the forgiveneſs of ſins* ‡. In what way the Death of Chriſt was of that efficacy it is ſaid to be, in procuring the reconciliation of ſinners, the Scriptures have not explained: It is enough that the doctrine is revealed; that it is not contrary to any truths which Reaſon and Experience teach us; and that it accords in perfect harmony with the uſual me-

* Epheſ. ii. † Pet. iii. 18. ‡ Coloſſ. i. 14.

thod

thod of the Divine Conduct in the Government of the World §.

Again it hath been ſaid, that if the Chriſtian Revelation were true, it muſt have been Univerſal, and could not have been left upon Doubtful Evidence. But God, in his Natural Providence, diſpenſes his gifts in great variety, not only among creatures of the ſame ſpecies, but to the ſame individuals alſo at different times. Had the Chriſtian Revelation been Univerſal at firſt, yet from the diverſity of men's abilities both of mind and body, their various means of improvement, and other external advantages, ſome perſons muſt ſoon have been in a ſituation, with reſpect to religious knowledge, much ſuperior to that of others, as much perhaps as they are at preſent: And all men will

§ Ch. 5.

be equitably dealt with at laſt; and to whom little is given, of him little will be required. Then as to the Evidence for Religion being left Doubtful, difficulties of this ſort, like difficulties in Practice, afford ſcope and opportunity for a virtuous exerciſe of the underſtanding, and diſpoſe the mind to acquieſce and reſt ſatisfied with any evidence that is real. In the daily commerce of life, men are obliged to act upon great uncertainties, with regard to ſucceſs in their Temporal Purſuits: and the caſe with regard to Religion is parallel. However, though Religion be not intuitively true, the proofs of it which we have are amply ſufficient in reaſon to induce us to embrace it; and diſſatisfaction with thoſe proofs may poſſibly be men's own fault *.

Nothing remains but to attend to

* Ch. 6.

the

the Poſitive Evidence there is for the truth of Chriſtianity. Now beſides its direct and fundamental proofs, which are Miracles and Prophecies; there are many Collateral Circumſtances, which may be united into one view, and all together may be conſidered as making up One Argument. In this way of treating the ſubject, the Revelation, whether real or otherwiſe, may be ſuppoſed to be wholly Hiſtorical: The general deſign of which appears to be, to give an account of the Condition of Religion, and its profeſſors, with a conciſe narration of the Political State of things, as far as Religion is affected by it, during a great length of time, near ſix thouſand years of which are already paſt. More particularly it comprehends an account of God's entering into Covenant with one nation, the Jews, that he

would

would be their God, and that they ſhould be His People; of his often interpoſing in their affairs; giving them the promiſe, and afterwards the poſſeſſion, of a flouriſhing country; aſſuring them of the greateſt national proſperity, in caſe of their obedience, and threatening the ſevereſt national puniſhment, in caſe they forſook Him, and joined in the Idolatry of their Pagan neighbours. It contains alſo a prediction of a Particular Perſon, to appear in the fulneſs of time, in whom all the promiſes of God to the Jews were to be fulfilled: And it relates that, at the time expected, a Perſon did actually appear, aſſuming to be the Saviour foretold; that he worked various miracles among them, in confirmation of his divine authority; and, as was foretold alſo, was rejected

and put to death by the very people who had long deſired and waited for his coming: but that his Religion, in ſpite of all oppoſition, was eſtabliſhed in the world by his diſciples, inveſted with ſupernatural powers for that purpoſe: of the fate and fortunes of which Religion there is a prophetical deſcription, carried down to the end of time. Let any one now, after reading the above Hiſtory, and not knowing whether the whole were not a fiction, be ſuppoſed to aſk, Whether all that is here related be true? and inſtead of a direct anſwer, let him be informed of the ſeveral acknowledged Facts, which are found to correſpond to it in real life; and then let him compare the Hiſtory and Facts together, and obſerve the aſtoniſhing coincidence of both:

ſuch

ſuch a joint review muſt appear to him of very great weight, and to amount to evidence ſomewhat more than human. And unleſs the whole ſeries, and every particular circumſtance contained in it, can be thought to have ariſen from accident, the Truth of Chriſtianity is proved *.

* Ch. 7. To the Analogy are ſubjoined Two Diſſertations, both originally inſerted in the body of the work. One on *Perſonal Identity*, in which are contained ſome ſtrictures on Mr. *Locke*, who aſſerts that Conſciouſneſs makes or conſtitutes Perſonal Identity; whereas, as our Author obſerves, Conſciouſneſs makes only Perſonality, or is neceſſary to the idea of a Perſon, i. e. a thinking intelligent Being, but pre-ſuppoſes, and therefore cannot conſtitute, Perſonal Identity; juſt as Knowledge pre-ſuppoſes Truth, but does not conſtitute it. Conſciouſneſs of paſt actions does indeed ſhew us the Identity of ourſelves, or gives us a certain aſſurance that we are the ſame Perſons or living Agents now, which we were at the time to which our remembrance can look back: but ſtill we ſhould be the ſame Perſons as we were, though this Conſciouſneſs of what is paſt were wanting, though all that had been done by us formerly were forgotten; unleſs it be true that no perſon has exiſted a ſingle moment beyond what he can remember. The other Diſſertation is *On the Nature of Virtue*, which properly belongs to the Moral Syſtem of our Author, already explained.

The view here given of the Moral and Religious Syſtems of Biſhop BUTLER, it will immediately be perceived, is chiefly intended for Younger Students, eſpecially for Students in Divinity; to whom it is hoped it may be of uſe, ſo as to encourage them to peruſe, with proper diligence, the original works of the Author himſelf. For it may be neceſſary to obſerve, that neither of the Volumes of this excellent Prelate are addreſſed to thoſe, who read for amuſement, or curioſity, or to get rid of time. All Subjects are not to be comprehended with the ſame eaſe; and Morality and Religion, when treated as Sciences, each accompanied with difficulties of its own, can neither of them be underſtood as they ought, without a very peculiar attention.

But

But Morality and Religion are not merely to be ſtudied as Sciences, or as being ſpeculatively true; they are to be regarded in another and higher light, as the Rule of Life and Manners, as containing authoritative directions by which to regulate our Faith and Practice. And in this view, the infinite importance of them conſidered, it can never be an indifferent matter whether they be received or rejected. For both claim to be the voice of God; and whether they be ſo or not, cannot be known, till their claims be impartially examined. If they indeed come from Him, we are bound to conform to them at our peril: nor is it left to our choice, whether we will ſubmit to the obligations they impoſe upon us or not; for ſubmit

to them we muſt in ſuch a ſenſe, as to incur the puniſhments denounced by both againſt wilful diſobedience to their injunctions.

A CHARGE

BISHOP BUTLER's

CHARGE TO THE CLERGY

OF THE

DIOCESE OF DURHAM,

IN THE YEAR MDCCLI.

A

CHARGE

DELIVERED TO THE

CLERGY, &c. *

IT is impoſſible for me, my Brethren, upon our firſt meeting of this kind, to forbear lamenting with you the general decay of Religion in this nation; which is

* The publication of Biſhop Butler's Charge, in the year 1751, was followed by a Pamphlet, printed in 1752, entitled *A Serious Enquiry into the Uſe and Importance of External Religion, occaſioned by ſome Paſſages in the Right Reverend the Lord Biſhop of Durham's Charge to the Clergy of that Dioceſe*, &c. *humbly addreſſed to his Lordſhip*. This Pamphlet has been reprinted in a miſcellaneous work: Such parts of it, as ſeemed moſt worthy of obſervation, the reader will find in the Notes ſubjoined to thoſe paſſages of the Charge, to which the Pamphlet refers.

now obſerved by every one, and has been for ſome time the complaint of all ſerious perſons. The Influence of it is more and more wearing out of the minds of men, even of thoſe who do not pretend to enter into Speculations upon the ſubject: But the number of thoſe who do, and who profeſs themſelves Unbelievers, increaſes, and with their numbers their zeal. Zeal, 'tis natural to aſk---for what? Why truly *for* nothing, but *againſt* every thing that is good and ſacred amongſt us.

Indeed, whatever efforts are made againſt our Religion, no Chriſtian can poſſibly deſpair of it. For He, who has *all power in heaven and earth*, has promiſed, that *he will be with us to the end of the world.* Nor can the preſent Decline of it be any ſtumbling-block to ſuch as are conſiderate; ſince he himſelf has ſo ſtrongly expreſſed what is as remarkably predicted in other paſſages of Scripture, the great defection from his religion which ſhould be in the latter days, by that prophetick queſtion, *When the Son*

of Man cometh, ſhall he find Faith upon the earth? How near this time is, God only knows; but this kind of Scripture ſigns of it is too apparent. For as different ages have been diſtinguiſhed by different ſorts of particular errors and vices, the deplorable diſtinction of Ours is, an avowed Scorn of Religion in ſome, and a growing Diſregard to it in the generality.

As to the profeſſed Enemies of Religion, I know not how often they may come in your way; but often enough, I fear, in the way of ſome at leaſt amongſt you, to require conſideration, what is the proper Behaviour towards them. One would to be ſure avoid great familiarities with theſe perſons; eſpecially if they affect to be licentious and profane in their common talk. Yet if you fall into their company, treat them with the regards which belong to their rank; for ſo we muſt people who are vicious in any other reſpect. We ſhould ſtudy what St. *James*, with wonderful elegance and expreſſiveneſs, calls *meekneſs of wiſdom*, in our behaviour towards

wards all men; but more eſpecially towards theſe men: Not ſo much as being what we owe to them, but to ourſelves and our religion; that we may *adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour*, in our carriage towards thoſe who labour to vilify it.

For Diſcourſe with them; the caution commonly given, not to attempt anſwering objections which we have not conſidered, is certainly juſt. Nor need any one in a particular caſe be aſhamed frankly to acknowledge his ignorance, provided it be not general. And though it were, to talk of what he is not acquainted with, is a dangerous method of endeavouring to conceal it. But a conſiderate perſon, however qualified he be to defend his religion, and anſwer the objections he hears made againſt it, may ſometimes ſee cauſe to decline that office. Sceptical and profane men are extremely apt to bring up this ſubject at meetings of entertainment, and ſuch as are of the freer ſort: Innocent ones, I mean, otherwiſe I ſhould not ſuppoſe you would be preſent at them. Now

Religion

Religion is by far too ſerious a matter to be the hackney ſubject upon theſe occaſions. And by preventing its being made ſo, you will better ſecure the reverence which is due to it, than by entering into its defence. Every one obſerves, that mens having examples of vice often before their eyes, familiariſes it to the mind, and has a tendency to take off that juſt abhorrence of it which the innocent at firſt felt, even tho' it ſhould not alter their *judgment* of vice, or make them really *believe* it to be leſs evil or dangerous. In like manner, the hearing religion often diſputed about in light familiar converſation, has a tendency to leſſen that ſacred regard to it, which a good man would endeavour always to keep up, both in himſelf and others. But this is not all: People are too apt inconſiderately to take for granted, that things are really queſtionable, becauſe they hear them often diſputed. This indeed is ſo far from being a conſequence, that we know demonſtrated truths have been diſputed, and even matters of fact,

the objects of our ſenſes. But were it a conſequence, were the evidence of religion no more than doubtful, then it ought not to be concluded falſe any more than true, nor denied any more than affirmed; for Suſpence would be the reaſonable ſtate of mind with regard to it. And then it ought in all reaſon, conſidering its infinite Importance, to have nearly the ſame influence upon Practice, as if it were thoroughly believed. For would it not be madneſs for a man to forſake a ſafe road, and prefer to it one in which he acknowledges there is an even chance he ſhould loſe his life, though there were an even chance likewiſe of his getting ſafe through it? Yet there are people abſurd enough, to take the ſuppoſed Doubtfulneſs of Religion for the ſame thing as a proof of its Falſehood, after they have concluded it doubtful from hearing it often called in queſtion. This ſhews how infinitely unreaſonable ſceptical men are, with regard to religion, and that they really lay aſide their reaſon upon this ſubject as much as the moſt extravagant

extravagant Enthuſiaſts. But further, cavilling and objecting upon any ſubject is much eaſier than clearing up difficulties: And this laſt part will always be put upon the defenders of religion. Now a man may be fully convinced of the truth of a matter, and upon the ſtrongeſt reaſons, and yet not be able to anſwer all the difficulties which may be raiſed upon it.

Then again, the general Evidence of Religion is complex and various. It conſiſts of a long ſeries of things, one preparatory to and confirming another, from the very beginning of the world to the preſent time. And 'tis eaſy to ſee how impoſſible it muſt be, in a curſory converſation, to unite all this into one argument, and repreſent it as it ought; and, could it be done, how utterly indiſpoſed people would be to attend to it—I ſay in a curſory converſation: Whereas unconnected objections are thrown out in a few words, and are eaſily apprehended, without more attention than is uſual in common talk. So that, notwithſtanding we

have the beſt cauſe in the world, and though a man were very capable of defending it, yet I know not why he ſhould be forward to undertake it upon ſo great a diſadvantage, and to ſo little good effect, as it muſt be done amidſt the gaiety and careleſſneſs of common converſation.

But then it will be neceſſary to be very particularly upon your guard, that you may not *ſeem*, by way of compliance, to join in with any levity of diſcourſe reſpecting Religion. Nor would one let any pretended argument againſt it paſs intirely without notice; nor any groſs ribaldry upon it, without expreſſing our thorough diſapprobation. This laſt may ſometimes be done by Silence; for ſilence ſometimes is very expreſſive; as was that of our bleſſed SAVIOUR before the *Sanhedrim*, and before *Pilate*. Or it may be done by obſerving mildly, that Religion deſerves another ſort of treatment, or a more thorough conſideration than ſuch a time, or ſuch circumſtances admit. However, as it is abſolutely neceſſary, that we take

care,

care, by diligent reading and ſtudy, to be always prepared, to be *ready always to give an anſwer to every man that aſketh a Reaſon of the Hope that is in us*; ſo there may be occaſions when it will highly become us to do it. And then we muſt take care to do it in the ſpirit which the Apoſtle requires, *with meekneſs and fear**: *meekneſs* towards thoſe who give occaſions for entering into the defence of our Religion; and with *fear*, not of them, but of God; with that reverential fear, which the nature of Religion requires, and which is ſo far from being inconſiſtent with, that it will inſpire proper courage towards men. Now this reverential fear will lead us to inſiſt ſtrongly upon the infinite greatneſs of God's ſcheme of government, both in extent and duration, together with the wiſe connexion of its parts, and the impoſſibility of accounting fully for the ſeveral parts, without ſeeing the whole plan of Providence to which they relate; which

* 1 Pet. iii. 15.

is beyond the utmoſt ſtretch of our underſtanding. And to all this muſt be added the neceſſary deficiency of human language, when things divine are the ſubject of it. Theſe obſervations are a proper full anſwer to many objections, and very material with regard to all.

But your ſtanding buſineſs, and which requires conſtant attention, is with the body of the People; to revive in them the Spirit of Religion which is ſo much declining. And it may ſeem, that whatever reaſon there be for caution as to entering into any argumentative defence of Religion *in common converſation*, yet that 'tis neceſſary to do this *from the pulpit*, in order to guard the people againſt being corrupted, however in ſome places. But then ſurely it ſhould be done in a manner as little controverſial as poſſible. For though ſuch as are capable of ſeeing the force of objections are capable alſo of ſeeing the force of the anſwers which are given to them; yet the truth is, the people will not competently attend to either.

But

But 'tis eaſy to ſee which they will attend to moſt. And to hear Religion treated of, as what many deny, and which has much ſaid againſt it as well as for it; this cannot but have a tendency to give them ill impreſſions at any time: And ſeems particularly improper for all perſons at a time of devotion; even for ſuch as are arrived at the moſt ſettled ſtate of piety:— I ſay at a time of Devotion, when we are aſſembled to yield ourſelves up to the full influence of the DIVINE PRESENCE, and to call forth into actual exerciſe every pious affection of heart. For it is to be repeated, that the heart and courſe of affections may be diſturbed when there is no alteration of judgment. Now the Evidence of Religion may be laid before men without any air of Controverſy. The proof of the Being of God, from final cauſes, or the deſign and wiſdom which appears in every part of nature; together with the law of virtue written upon our hearts*: the proof

* The law of virtue written upon our hearts.] The Author of the *Enquiry*, mentioned above, informs us in his Poſtſcript,

proof of Chriſtianity from miracles, and the accompliſhment of prophecies; and the

Poſtſcript, that "the certain conſequence of referring man-
" kind to a *law of nature or virtue written upon their hearts* is
" their having recourſe to *their own ſenſe of things* on all
" occaſions; which being, in a great majority, no better
" than family ſuperſtition, party prejudice, or ſelf-intereſted
" artifice, (perhaps a compound of all) will be too apt
" to over-rule the plain precepts of the Goſpel." And he declares, he has " no better opinion of the *clearneſs*,
" *certainty*, *uniformity*, *univerſality*, &c. of this law, than"
he has " of the *importance* of *external religion*." What then muſt we ſay to St. *Paul*, who not only aſſerts, in the ſtrongeſt terms, the reality of ſuch a law, but ſpeaks of its obligation as extending to all mankind? blaming ſome among the Gentiles as *without excuſe*, for not adverting to and obeying it; and commending others for *doing by Nature* (in contradiſtinction to Revelation) *the things contained in the law*, thus *ſhewing the work of the law written in their hearts*. If, becauſe " Natural Religion is
" liable to be miſtaken, it is high time to have done with
" it in the Pulpit"; how comes it that the ſame Apoſtle refers the *Philippians* to the ſtudy of this Religion, to *whatſoever things are true, honeſt, juſt, lovely and of good report?* And yet without ſuch a ſtudy our knowledge of the moral law muſt always remain imperfect; for a complete Syſtem of Morality is certainly no where to be found either in the Old or New Teſtament. When a Chriſtian miniſter is enforcing the duties or doctrines of Revealed Religion, he may perhaps do well to " tell

" his

the confirmation which the natural and civil hiſtory of the world give to the Scripture

" his people he has *no other* proof of the original, truth, " obligations, preſent benefits and future rewards of " Religion to lay before them, than what is contained in " the Scriptures." But what if his purpoſe be to inculcate ſome Moral Virtue? Will it not be uſeful here, beſides obſerving that the practice of that virtue is enjoined by a Divine Command, to recommend it ſtill further to his hearers, by ſhewing that it approves itſelf to our inward ſenſe and perception, and accords with the native ſentiments and ſuggeſtions of our minds? Metaphyſicians may ſay what they will of our feelings of this ſort being all illuſive, liable to be perverted by education and habit, and judged of by men's own ſenſe of things: They, whoſe underſtandings are yet *unſpoiled by philoſophy and vain deceit*, will be little diſpoſed to liſten to ſuch aſſertions. Nor are there wanting arguments which prove, and, as ſhould ſeem, to the ſatisfaction of every reaſonable enquirer, that the great and leading principles of moral duties have in all ages been the ſame; that ſuch virtues as benevolence, juſtice, compaſſion, gratitude, accidental obſtacles removed, and when the preciſe meaning of the words has been once explained, are inſtinctively known and approved by all men; and that our approbation of theſe is as much a part of our nature implanted in us by God, and as little liable to caprice and faſhion, as the ſenſe of ſeeing, given us alſo by Him, by which all bodies

appear

Scripture account of things: theſe evidences of Religion might properly be inſiſted on, in a way to affect and influence the heart, though there were no profeſſed Unbelievers in the world; and therefore may be inſiſted on, without taking much notice that there are ſuch. And even *their* particular objections may be obviated without a formal mention of them. Beſides, as to Religion in general, it is a practical thing, and no otherwiſe a matter of ſpeculation, than common Prudence in the management of our worldly affairs is ſo. And if one were endeavouring to bring a plain man to be more

appear to us in an erect, and not an inverted poſition. —Mr. Locke's authority has been generally looked up to as deciſive on ſuch queſtions, and his ſentiments have been embraced implicitly and without examination. That great and good man however is not to be charged with the pernicious conſequences, which others have drawn from his opinions: Conſequences which have been carried to ſuch a length, as to deſtroy all moral difference of human actions; making virtue and vice altogether arbitrary; *calling evil good, and good evil; putting darkneſs for light, and light for darkneſs; putting bitter for ſweet, and ſweet for bitter.*

careful, with regard to this laſt, it would be thought a ſtrange method of doing it, to perplex him with ſtating formally the ſeveral objections which men of gaiety or ſpeculation have made againſt Prudence, and the advantages which they pleaſantly tell us Folly has over it; though one could anſwer thoſe objections ever ſo fully.

Nor does the want of Religion, in the generality of the common people, appear owing to a ſpeculative diſbelief, or denial of it, but chiefly to thoughtleſſneſs and the common temptations of life. Your chief buſineſs therefore is to endeavour to beget a Practical Senſe of it upon their hearts, as what they acknowledge their belief of, and profeſs they ought to conform themſelves to. And this is to be done, by keeping up, as well as we are able, the Form and Face of Religion with decency and reverence, and in ſuch a degree as to bring the thoughts of Religion often to their minds*; and then endeavouring to

* By keeping up the Form and Face of Religion—in ſuch

make this Form more and more ſubſervient to promote the Reality and Power of it. The Form of Religion may indeed

ſuch a degree, as to bring the thoughts of Religion *often* to their minds.] To this it is ſaid by our *Enquirer*, that "the Clergy of the Church of England have no "way of keeping up the *form* and *face* of Religion any "*oftener*, or in *any other degree*, than is directed by the "preſcribed order of the Church." As if the whole duty of a Pariſh Prieſt conſiſted in reading prayers and a ſermon on Sundays, and performing the occaſional offices appointed in the Liturgy! One would think the writer who made this objection had never read more of the Charge than the *four pages* he has particularly ſelected for the ſubject of his animadverſions. Had he looked farther, he would have found other methods recommended to the Clergy of introducing a ſenſe of Religion into the minds of their Pariſhioners, which occur *much oftener* than the times allotted for the Public Services of the Church: Such as family prayers; acknowledging the divine bounty at our meals; perſonal applications from Miniſters of Pariſhes to individuals under their care, on particular occaſions and circumſtances; as at the time of Confirmation, at firſt receiving the holy Communion, on recovery from ſickneſs, and the like; none of which are preſcribed in our eſtabliſhed Ritual, any more than thoſe others ſo ludicrouſly mentioned by this writer, "bowing to the Eaſt, turning the face to that quarter in "repeating the creeds, dipping the finger in water, and "therewith croſſing the child's forehead in baptiſm."

be

be where there is little of the Thing itſelf; but the Thing itſelf cannot be preſerved amongſt mankind without the Form*. And this Form frequently occurring in ſome inſtance or other of it, will be a frequent admonition† to bad men to re-

 pent,

* The Thing itſelf cannot be preſerved amongſt mankind without the Form.] The Quakers reject all Forms, even the two of Chriſt's own inſtitution: Will it be ſaid that "theſe men have no Religion preſerved "among them?" It will neither be ſaid nor inſinuated. The Quakers, though they have not the *form*, are careful to keep up the *face* of Religion; as appears not only from the cuſtom of aſſembling themſelves for the purpoſes of Public Worſhip on the Lord's day, but from their Silent Meetings on other days of the week. And that they are equally ſenſible of the importance of maintaining the influence of Religion on their minds is manifeſt from the practice of what they call *inward prayer*, in conformity to the direction of Scripture to *pray continually:* "Which," ſaith Robert Barclay, "cannot be underſtood of *outward* prayer, be-"cauſe it were impoſſible that men ſhould be always upon "their knees, expreſſing the *words* of prayer; which "would hinder them from the exerciſe of thoſe duties no "leſs poſitively commanded." *Apology for the Quakers*, Prop. xi. *Of Worſhip*.

† This Form *frequently* occurring in ſome inſtance or other

pent, and to good men to grow better; and alſo be the means of their doing ſo.

other of it, will be a *frequent* admonition, &c.] Here it has been objected, that "the *number*, *variety*, and *fre-* "*quent* occurrence of forms in Religion are too apt to "be conſidered by *the generality* as *commutations* for their "vices, as ſomething *ſubſtituted* in lieu of repentance, "and as loads and incumbrances upon true Chriſtian "edification." This way of arguing againſt the uſe of a thing from the abuſe of it, inſtead of arguing from the nature of the thing itſelf, is the maſter Sophiſm that pervades the whole performance we are here examining. What reaſonable man ever denied that the pomp of outward worſhip has been ſometimes miſtaken for inward piety? that poſitive inſtitutions, when reſted in as ends, inſtead of being applied as means, are hurtful to the intereſts of true Religion? Not Biſhop Butler certainly; who blames the obſervances of the Papiſts on this account; ſome of them as being "in themſelves wrong "and ſuperſtitious;" and others, as being "made ſub- "ſervient to the purpoſes of ſuperſtition," and for this reaſon "aboliſhed by our Reformers." In the mean while it will ſtill be true, that bodily worſhip is by no means to be diſcarded, as unuſeful in exciting ſpiritual devotion; on the contrary, that they mutually aſſiſt and ſtrengthen each other; and that a mere mental intercourſe with God, and a religious ſervice purely intellectual, is altogether unſuitable to ſuch a creature as man, during his preſent ſtate on earth.

That which men have accounted Religion in the ſeveral countries of the world, generally ſpeaking, has had a great and conſpicuous part in all Public Appearances, and the face of it been kept up with great reverence throughout all ranks, from the higheſt to the loweſt; not only upon occaſional ſolemnities, but alſo in the daily courſe of behaviour. In the Heathen world, their Superſtition was the chief ſubject of ſtatuary, ſculpture, painting, and poetry. It mixt itſelf with buſineſs, civil forms, diverſions, domeſtic entertainments, and every part of common life. The Mahometans are obliged to ſhort devotions five times between morning and evening. In Roman-Catholic countries, people cannot paſs a day without having Religion recalled to their thoughts, by ſome or other memorial of it; by ſome ceremony or public religious form occurring in their way*: Beſides

* In Roman-Catholic countries, people cannot paſs a day without having *Religion* recalled to their thoughts—by ſome

Beſides their frequent holidays, the ſhort prayers they are daily called to, and the occa-

ſome ceremony or public *religious* form occurring in their way.] "What in the former period" (when ſpeaking of the Heathen world) was "called *Superſtition*, be-"comes in this" (when ſpeaking of Roman-Catholics) "*Religion* and *Religious Forms*; which the Papiſts pretend-"ing to connect with Chriſtianity, and the Charge giv-"ing no hint that this is no more than a pretence, a "plain reader muſt needs take this as ſpoken of the "*means and memorials* of TRUE RELIGION, and will "accordingly conſider theſe as recommended to his prac-"tice and imitation." If a plain reader, at firſt view of the paſſage alluded to, ſhould inadvertently fall into ſuch a miſtake, he would find himſelf immediately corrected by the very next ſentence that follows, where the Religion of the Roman Catholics and their Superſtition are diſtinguiſhed from each other in expreſs words. But the truth is, the terms in queſtion are uſed with the ſtricteſt propriety. The deſign of the Biſhop, in this part of his Charge, is to conſider Religion, not under the notion of its being true, but as it affects the ſenſes and imaginations of the multitude. For ſo the Paragraph begins. "That which "men *have accounted* Religion in the ſeveral countries of "the world," (whether the Religion be true or falſe is be-ſide his preſent argument) "generally ſpeaking, has had "a great and conſpicuous part in all Public Appear-"ances." This poſition he illuſtrates by three examples, the Heathen, the Mahometan, and the Roman-Catholic

Religions,

occaſional devotions enjoined by Confeſſors. By theſe means their Superſtition ſinks deep into the minds of the people, and their Religion alſo into the minds of ſuch among them as are ſerious and well-diſpoſed. Our Reformers, conſidering that ſome of theſe obſervances were in themſelves wrong and ſuperſtitious, and others

Religions. The two firſt of theſe, having little or nothing of true Religion belonging to them, may well enough be characterized under the common name of Superſtition: the laſt contains a mixture of both; which therefore the Biſhop, like a good writer as well as a juſt reaſoner, is careful to diſtinguiſh. In Roman-Catholic countries a man can hardly travel a mile, without paſſing a Crucifix erected on the road-ſide: He may either ſtop to worſhip the image repreſented on the croſs; or he may ſimply be reminded by it of his own relation to Chriſt crucified: Thus by one and the ſame outward ſign "Religion "may be recalled to his thoughts," or Superſtition may take poſſeſſion of his mind. In the celebration of the Euchariſt, the elements of bread and wine are regarded by a Papiſt as the very body and blood of Chriſt; to a Proteſtant they appear only as ſymbols and memorials of that body and blood: What in one is an act of rational devotion, becomes in the other an inſtance of the groſſeſt Superſtition, if not Idolatry.

of them made ſubſervient to the purpoſes of Superſtition, aboliſhed them, reduced the Form of Religion to great ſimplicity, and enjoined no more particular rules, nor left any thing more of what was External in Religion than was, in a manner, neceſſary to preſerve a ſenſe of Religion itſelf upon the minds of the people. But a great part of this is neglected by the generality amongſt us; for inſtance, the Service of the Church, not only upon common days, but alſo upon Saints days; and ſeveral other things might be mentioned. Thus they have no cuſtomary admonition, no publick call to recollect the thoughts of GOD and RELIGION from one Sunday to another.

It was far otherwiſe under the LAW. *Theſe words*, ſays Moſes to the children of ISRAEL, *which I command thee, ſhall be in thine heart: And thou ſhalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and ſhalt talk of them when thou ſitteſt in thine houſe, and when thou walkeſt by the way, and when thou lieſt down, and when*

when thou riſeſt up *. And as they were commanded this, ſo 'tis obvious how much

* *And when thou riſeſt up.*] Allowing with the *Enquirer* that "what Moſes in this paſſage wanted to have effected was obedience to the *moral* law," nothing ſure could be of greater uſe in ſecuring that obedience than the practice here enjoined. Our *Enquirer* however is of a different opinion; and "very much queſtions whether his Lordſhip could have fallen upon any paſſage "in the Old Teſtament, which relates at all to his ſubject, that would have been leſs favourable to his argument." *Who ſhall decide*, &c?——The Biſhop goes on, "As the Jews were commanded this, ſo 'tis obvious how much the Conſtitution of their Law was "adapted to effect it, and keep Religion ever in view." Upon which the Enquirer remarks, "It was then very "ill, or at leaſt very unwiſely done, to abrogate that Law, "whoſe Conſtitution was adapted to ſo excellent a purpoſe." Let us firſt ſee what may be offered in defence of the Biſhop, and then conſider what is to be ſaid in anſwer to his Opponent. The purpoſe for which the Moſaic Conſtitution was eſtabliſhed was this, To preſerve, amidſt a world univerſally addicted to Polytheiſm and Idolatry, the great doctrine of the Unity of the Divine Nature, *till the ſeed ſhould come to whom the promiſe was made.* As a means to this end, the Iſraelites were not only to be kept ſeparate from every other nation; but, the better to enſure ſuch ſeparation, they were to be conſtantly

much the Conſtitution of that Law was adapted to effect it, and keep Religion ever

ſtantly employed in a multifarious Ritual, which left them neither time nor opportunity for deviating into the ſuperſtitious obſervances of their Pagan neighbours. And this, I ſuppoſe, may ſuffice for vindicating the Biſhop's aſſertion, that "the Conſtitution of the Jewiſh Law was adapted to keep Religion ever in view." But the Jewiſh Law was not only adapted to this end; we are next to obſerve, that the end itſelf was actually gained. For though it be too notorious to be denied, that the Jews did not always confine their religious homage to the God of Iſrael, but polluted the ſervice, due to Him alone, with foreign worſhip; yet, even in their worſt defections, it ſhould be remembered, they never totally rejected the true Jehovah; and after their return from captivity, they were ſo thoroughly cured of all remaining propenſity to the idolatrous rites of Heatheniſm, as never again to violate their allegiance to the God of their Fathers. It appears then that, in conſequence of the Jewiſh Separation, the principle of the Unity was in fact preſerved inviolate among that people till the coming of Chriſt. When the Moſaic Conſtitution had thus attained its end, and mankind were now prepared for the reception of a *better covenant*, the Law expired of courſe; the partition wall that had divided the Jew from the Gentile was taken down, and all diſtinction between them loſt under the common name of Chriſtians. And this may ſuffice to ſhew, in oppoſition to our *Enquirer*, that it was both very *well* and very

wiſely

ever in view. And without ſomewhat of this nature, Piety will grow languid even among the better ſort of men; and the worſt will go on quietly in an abandoned courſe, with fewer interruptions from within than they would have, were religious reflections forced oftener upon their minds *, and conſequently with leſs probability of their amendment. Indeed

wiſely done to abrogate a Law, when the purpoſe for which the Law had been enacted was accompliſhed.

* Were religious reflections *forced* oftener upon their minds.] "According to the Biſhop's doctrine" then, ſays the *Enquirer*, "it ſhould be not only good policy, "but wholeſome diſcipline to *force* men in *England* to "come to Church, and in *France* to go to Maſs." And again, "If Externals have this virtue to *enforce* religious "reflections, it muſt be right to *compel* thoſe who are "indiſpoſed to ſuch reflections to attend theſe memo-"rials." Yes; granting that the ſenſe of the paſſage in the Charge is not ſhamefully perverted, and that we are to underſtand the Biſhop here to ſpeak of *external* force and compulſion. Whereas by "religious Reflections *forced*" is plainly meant no more than this, religious Reflections oftener *thrown in men's way*, *brought* more frequently *into their thoughts*, ſo as to produce an habitual recollection that they are always in the Divine Preſence.

in moſt ages of the Church, the care of reaſonable men has been, as there has been for the moſt part occaſion, to draw the people off from laying too great weight upon external things; upon formal acts of piety. But the ſtate of matters is quite changed now with us. Theſe things are neglected to a degree, which is, and cannot but be attended with a decay of all that is good. 'Tis highly ſeaſonable Now to inſtruct the People in the Importance of External Religion †.

And

† To inſtruct the People in the Importance of External Religion.] "The Importance of External Religion," the *Enquirer* remarks, "is the grand engine of "the Papiſts, which they play with the greateſt effect "upon our common people, who are always ſooneſt ta-"ken and inſnared by *form* and *ſhew*; and, ſo far as we "concur with them in the principle, we are doing their "work; ſince, if externals, as ſuch, are important, "the plain natural Conſequence is, *the more of them the* "*better*." He had the ſame reflection once before: "If true Religion cannot be preſerved among men with-"out *forms*, the Conſequence muſt be, that the *Romiſh* "Religion, having——*more frequent* occurrences of "forms, is better than other Religions, which have *fewer* "of

And doubtleſs under this head muſt come into conſideration a proper regard to the Structures which are conſecrated to the Service of God. In the preſent turn of the age, one may obſerve a wonderful frugality in every thing which has reſpect to Religion, and extravagance in every thing elſe. But amidſt the appearances of opulence and improvement in all common things, which are now ſeen in moſt places, it would be hard to find a reaſon, why theſe Monuments of ancient Piety ſhould not be preſerved in their original Beauty and Magnificence. But in

" of theſe ——occurrences." To this argument I reply, *Nego Conſequentiam.* There may be too much of Form in Religion, as well as too little: the one leads to Enthuſiaſm, the other degenerates into Superſtition; one is Puritaniſm, the other Popery; whereas the Rational Worſhip of God is equally removed from either Extreme. Did the *Enquirer* never hear of the poſſibility of having too much of a good thing? Or does he ſuppoſe, with the late Hiſtorian of Great-Britain, that all Religion is divided into two ſpecies, the Superſtitious and the Fanatical; and that whatever is not one of theſe, muſt of neceſſity be the other?

the

the leaſt opulent places they muſt be preſerved in becoming Repair; and every thing relating to the Divine Service be, however, decent and clean; otherwiſe we ſhall vilify the face of religion whilſt we keep it up. All this is indeed principally the duty of others. Yours is to preſs ſtrongly upon them what is their duty in this reſpect, and admoniſh them of it often, if they are negligent.

But then you muſt be ſure to take care and not neglect that part of the ſacred Fabric which belongs to You to maintain in Repair and Decency. Such neglect would be great impiety in you, and of moſt pernicious example to others. Nor could you, with any ſucceſs, or any propriety, urge upon them their duty in a regard in which you yourſelves ſhould be openly neglectful of it.

Biſhop FLEETWOOD has obſerved ‡, that *unleſs the good public ſpirit of building, repairing, and adorning* Churches *prevails a*

‡ Charge to the Clergy of St. Aſaph, 1710.

great deal more among us, and be more encouraged, an hundred years will bring to the ground an huge number of our Churches. This excellent Prelate made this obſervation forty years ago: And no one I believe will imagine, that the good ſpirit he has recommended prevails more at preſent than it did then.

But if theſe Appendages of the Divine Service are to be regarded, doubtleſs the Divine Service itſelf is more to be regarded; and the conſcientious attendance upon it ought often to be inculcated upon the people, as a plain precept of the Goſpel, as the means of Grace, and what has peculiar promiſes annexed to it. But External Acts of Piety and Devotion, and the frequent Returns of them are, moreover, neceſſary to keep up a ſenſe of Religion, which the affairs of the world will otherwiſe wear out of men's hearts. And the frequent Returns, whether of Public Devotions, or of any thing elſe, to introduce religion into men's ſerious thoughts, will have an influence upon them, in proportion

tion as they are ſuſceptible of religion, and not given over to a reprobate mind. For this reaſon, beſides others, the Service of the Church ought to be celebrated as often as you can have a Congregation to attend it.

But ſince the body of the People, eſpecially in Country Places, cannot be brought to attend it oftener than one day in a week; and ſince this is in no ſort enough to keep up in them a due ſenſe of Religion; it were greatly to be wiſhed they could be perſuaded to any thing which might, in ſome meaſure, ſupply the want of more frequent Public Devotions, or ſerve the like purpoſes. Family Prayers, regularly kept up in every Houſe, would have a great good effect.

Secret Prayer, as expreſsly as it is commanded by our SAVIOUR, and as evidently as it is implied in the notion of Piety, will yet, I fear, be grievouſly forgotten by the Generality, 'till they can be brought to fix for themſelves certain Times of the Day for it; ſince this is not done to their hands,

as

as it was in the Jewiſh Church by cuſtom or authority. Indeed, Cuſtom, as well as the manifeſt Propriety of the thing, and Examples of good men in Scripture, juſtify us in inſiſting, that none omit their prayers Morning or Evening, who have not thrown off all regards to Piety. But Secret Prayer comprehends not only Devotions before men begin and after they have ended the buſineſs of the day, but ſuch alſo as may be performed while they are employed in it, or even in company. And truly, if beſides our more Sett Devotions, morning and evening, all of us would fix upon certain Times of the Day, ſo that the return of the Hour ſhould remind us, to ſay ſhort prayers, or exerciſe our thoughts in a way equivalent to this; perhaps there are few perſons in ſo high and habitual a ſtate of piety, as not to find the benefit of it. If it took up no more than a minute or two, or even leſs time than that, it would ſerve the end I am propoſing; it would be a recollection, that we are in

the Divine Preſence, and contribute to our *being in the fear of the* LORD *all the day long*.

A duty of the like kind, and ſerving to the ſame purpoſe, is the particular acknowledgment of God when we are partaking of his bounty at our Meals. The neglect of this is ſaid to have been ſcandalous to a proverb, in the Heathen world ‡; but it is without ſhame laid aſide at the tables of the higheſt and the loweſt rank among us.

And as Parents ſhould be admoniſhed, and it ſhould be preſſed upon their conſciences, to teach their Children their Prayers and Catechiſm, it being what they are obliged to upon all accounts; ſo it is proper to be mentioned here, as a means by which they will bring the principles of Chriſtianity often to their own minds, inſtead of laying aſide all thoughts of it from week's-end to week's-end.

‡ Cudworth on the Lord's Supper, p. 8. Caſaub. in Athenæum, L. i. c. xi. p. 22. Duport. Præl. in Theophraſtum Ed. Needham. C. ix. p. 335, &c.

General

General exhortations to Piety, abſtracted from the particular circumſtances of it, are of great uſe to ſuch as are already got into a religious courſe of life: But, ſuch as are not, though they be touched with them, yet when they go away from Church, they ſcarce know where to begin, or how to ſet about what they are exhorted to. And 'tis with reſpect to Religion, as in the common affairs of life, in which many things of great conſequence intended, are yet never done at all, becauſe they may be done at any time, and in any manner; which would not be, were ſome determinate time and manner voluntarily fixed upon for the doing of them. Particular Rules and Directions then concerning the Times and Circumſtances of performing acknowledged duties, bring Religion nearer to Practice; and ſuch as are really proper, and cannot well be miſtaken, and are eaſily obſerved.——Such particular rules in Religion, prudently recommended, would have an influence upon the people.

All this indeed may be called Form; as every thing External in Religion may be merely ſo. And therefore whilſt we endeavour in theſe, and other like inſtances, to keep up the *Form of Godlineſs** amongſt thoſe who are our care, and over whom we have any influence, we muſt endeavour alſo that this Form be made more and more ſubſervient to promote the *Power* of it*. Admoniſh them to take heed, that they mean what they ſay in their Prayers, that their thoughts and intentions go along with their words, that they really in their hearts exert and exerciſe before God the affections they expreſs with their mouth. Teach them, not that External Religion is Nothing, for this is not true in any ſenſe; it being ſcarce poſſible, but that it will lay ſome ſort of reſtraint upon a man's morals; and 'tis moreover of good effect with reſpect to the world about him. But teach them that regard to one duty will in no ſort atone for the neglect of any other.

* 2 Tim iii. 5.

Endea-

Endeavour to raiſe in their hearts ſuch a ſenſe of God as ſhall be an habitual, ready Principle of Reverence, Love, Gratitude, Hope, Truſt, Reſignation, and Obedience. Exhort them to make uſe of every circumſtance, which brings the Subject of Religion at all before them; to turn their hearts habitually to Him; to recollect ſeriouſly the thoughts of His Preſence *in whom they live and move and have their being*, and by a ſhort act of their mind devote themſelves to his ſervice. —If, for inſtance, perſons would accuſtom themſelves to be thus admoniſhed by the very ſight of a Church, could it be called Superſtition? Enforce upon them the neceſſity of making Religion their principal concern, as what is the expreſs condition of the Goſpel-Covenant, and what the very nature of the thing requires. Explain to them the Terms of that Covenant of Mercy, founded in the Incarnation, Sacrifice and Interceſſion of Christ, together with the promiſed Aſſiſtance of the Holy Ghost, not to ſu-

perſede our own endeavours, but to render them effectual. The greater Feſtivals of the Church, being inſtituted for commemorating the ſeveral parts of the Goſpel Hiſtory, of courſe lead you to explain theſe its ſeveral Doctrines, and ſhew the Chriſtian Practice which ariſes out of them. And the more occaſional Solemnities of Religion, as well as theſe Feſtivals, will often afford you the faireſt opportunities of enforcing all theſe things in familiar converſation. Indeed all *affectation* of talking piouſly is quite nauſeous: And though there be nothing of this, yet men will eaſily be diſguſted at the too great frequency or length of theſe occaſional admonitions. But a word of God and Religion dropped ſometimes in converſation, gently, and without any thing ſevere or forbidding, in the manner of it; this is not unacceptable. It leaves an impreſſion, is repeated again by the hearers, and often remembered by plain well-diſpoſed perſons longer than one would think. Particular Circumſtances too which render

render men more apt to receive inſtruction, ſhould be laid hold of to talk ſeriouſly to their conſciences. For inſtance, after a man's Recovery from a dangerous Sickneſs, how proper is it to adviſe him to recollect and ever bear in mind, what were his Hopes or Fears, his Wiſhes and Reſolutions, when under the apprehenſion of Death; in order to bring him to Repentance, or confirm him in a Courſe of Piety, according as his life and character has been. So likewiſe the terrible accidents which often happen from Riot and Debauchery, and indeed almoſt every vice, are occaſions providentially thrown in your way, to diſcourſe againſt theſe vices in common converſation, as well as from the Pulpit, upon any ſuch accidents happening in your Pariſh, or in a neighbouring one. Occaſions and circumſtances of a like kind to ſome or other of theſe occur often, and ought, if I may ſo ſpeak, to be catched at, as opportunities of conveying inſtruction, both public and private, with great force and advantage.

Public

Public Inſtruction is alſo abſolutely neceſſary, and can in no ſort be diſpenſed with. But as it is common to all who are preſent, many perſons ſtrangely neglect to appropriate what they hear to Themſelves, to their own heart and life. Now the only Remedy for this in our power is a particular perſonal application. And a perſonal application makes a very different impreſſion from a common, general one. It were therefore greatly to be wiſhed, that every man ſhould have the principles of Chriſtianity, and his own particular duty enforced upon his conſcience, in a manner ſuited to his capacity, in private. And beſides the occaſional opportunities of doing this, ſome of which have been intimated, there are ſtated opportunities of doing it. Such, for inſtance, is Confirmation: And the uſual age for Confirmation is that time of life, from which Youth muſt become more and more their own Maſters, when they are often leaving their Father's Houſe, going out into the wide World and all

all its numerous Temptations; againſt which they particularly want to be fortified, by having ſtrong and lively impreſſions of Religion made upon their minds. Now the 61ſt Canon expreſſly requires, that every Miniſter that hath care of ſouls ſhall uſe his beſt endeavour to prepare and make able—as many as he can to be Confirmed; which cannot be done as it ought without ſuch perſonal application to each Candidate in particular as I am recommending. Another Opportunity for doing this is, when any one of your Pariſhioners ſignifies his name, as intending for the firſt time to be partaker of the Communion. The Rubrick requires, that all perſons, whenever they intend to receive, ſhall ſignify their names beforehand to the Miniſter; which, if it be not inſiſted upon in all caſes, ought abſolutely to be inſiſted upon for the firſt time. Now this even lays it in your way to diſcourſe with them in private upon the nature and benefits of this Sacrament, and enforce upon them the importance and

neceſſity of Religion. However I do not mean to put this upon the ſame foot with Catechiſing Youth and preparing them for Confirmation; theſe being indiſpenſable obligations and expreſſly commanded by our Canons. This private intercourſe with your Pariſhioners preparatory to their firſt Communion, let it, if you pleaſe, be conſidered as a voluntary ſervice to Religion on your part, and a voluntary inſtance of docility on theirs. I will only add, as to this practice, that it is regularly kept up by ſome perſons, and particularly by One, whoſe exemplary behaviour in every part of the Paſtoral Office is enforced upon You by his ſtation of Authority and Influence in (this part * eſpecially of) the Dioceſe.

I am very ſenſible, my Brethren, that ſome of theſe things, in places where they are greatly wanted, are impracticable, from the largeneſs of Pariſhes, ſuppoſe. And where there is no impediment of this ſort, yet the performance of them will depend

* The Archdeaconry of *Northumberland.*

upon

upon others, as well as upon you. People cannot be admoniſhed or inſtructed in private, unleſs they will permit it. And little will you be able to do in forming the minds of Children to a ſenſe of Religion, if their Parents will not aſſiſt you in it: and yet much leſs, if they will fruſtrate your endeavours, by their bad example, and giving encouragement to their Children to be diſſolute. The like is to be ſaid alſo of your influence in reforming the common people in general, in proportion as their ſuperiors act in like manner to ſuch Parents; and whilſt they, the lower people I mean, muſt have ſuch numerous temptations to Drunkenneſs and Riot every where placed in their way. And 'tis cruel uſage we often meet with, in being cenſured for not doing what we cannot do, without, what we cannot have, the concurrence of our cenſurers. Doubtleſs very much reproach which now lights upon the Clergy would be found to fall elſewhere, if due allowances were made for things of this kind. But then We,

my Brethren, muſt take care and not make more than due allowances for them. If Others deal uncharitably with us, we muſt deal impartially with Ourſelves, as in a matter of Conſcience, in determining what good is in our power to do: and not let Indolence keep us from ſetting about what really is in our power; nor any Heat of Temper create obſtacles in the proſecution of it, or render inſuperable ſuch as we find, when perhaps Gentleneſs and Patience would prevent, or overcome them.

Indeed all this Diligence to which I have been exhorting You and Myſelf, for God forbid I ſhould not conſider myſelf as included in all the general Admonitions you receive from me; all this Diligence in theſe things does indeed ſuppoſe, that we *give ourſelves wholly to them.* It ſuppoſes, not only that we have a real Senſe of Religion upon our own Minds, but alſo, that to promote the practice of it in Others is habitually uppermoſt in our thought and intention,

intention, as the buſineſs of our lives. And this, my Brethren, is the Buſineſs of our Lives, in every ſenſe, and upon every account. 'Tis the General Buſineſs of all Chriſtians as they have opportunity: 'Tis our Particular Buſineſs. 'Tis ſo as we have devoted ourſelves to it by the moſt ſolemn Engagements; as according to our *Lord's appointment* we *live of the Goſpel* *; and as the Preſervation and Advancement of Religion, in ſuch and ſuch diſtricts, are, in ſome reſpects, our appropriated Truſt.

By being faithful in the diſcharge of this our Truſt, by thus *taking heed to the Miniſtry we have received in the Lord that we fulfil it* †, we ſhall do our part towards reviving a Practical Senſe of Religion amongſt the People committed to our care. And this will be the ſecureſt barrier againſt the efforts of Infidelity; a great ſource of which plainly is, the endeavour to get rid of religious reſtraints. But

* 1. Cor. ix. 14. † Col. iv. 17.

whatever

whatever be our ſucceſs with regard to Others, we ſhall have the approbation of our Conſciences, and may reſt aſſured, that, as to ourſelves at leaſt, *our labour is not in vain in the* LORD *.

* 1. Cor. xv. 58.

FINIS.

Publiſhed by the EDITOR.

1. TWELVE SERMONS on the Prophecies concerning the Chriſtian Church; and, in particular, concerning the Church of Papal Rome: being the SECOND COURSE preached in Lincoln's-Inn Chapel, at the Lecture of the Right Reverend William Warburton, late Lord Biſhop of Glouceſter, 1776.

2. An ANALYSIS of the ROMAN CIVIL LAW; in which a compariſon is, occaſionally, made between the Roman Laws, and thoſe of England: being the Heads of a Courſe of Lectures, publickly read in the Univerſity of Cambridge. The Third Edition, 1779.

3. A SERMON preached before the LORDS Spiritual and Temporal, in the Abbey Church of Weſtminſter, on Friday, February 8, 1782; being the Day appointed by His Majeſty's Proclamation for a General Faſt.

Preached by the Bampton.

1. Twelve Sermons on the Prophecies concerning the Christian Church; and, in particular, concerning the Church of Papal Rome: being the Seven Canon preached in Lincoln's-Inn Chapel, at the Lecture of the Right Reverend William Warburton, late Lord Bishop of Gloucester. 1776.

2. An Analysis of the Roman Civil Law: in which the Division is occasionally made of the Roman Laws, and those of Modern States being the Heads of a Course of Lectures publickly read in the University of Cambridge. The Third Edition, 1779.

3. A Sermon preached before the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, in the Abbey Church of Westminster, on Friday, February 8, 1782; being the Day appointed by His Majesty's Proclamation for a General Fast.